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THE PRIVATEER.

OR,

THE PRIDE OF THE NANSEMOND.

BY LIEUT. ROBERT PHILLIPSE, U. S. N.

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THE PRIVATEER

CHAPTER I.

THE PRIVATEER'S QUARTERS.

THE war for the Independence of the United Colonies had raged four years. The soil of Virginia and Maryland had been stained with patriotic blood, and the sons of those States had become thoroughly aroused, if not for vengeance, at least for the defense of their own homes. Cornwallis had ravaged the line of the York river, and Fort McHenry was in the hands of the foe. This fortification commanded the harbor of Baltimore. The English ships of war commanded the entire bay of Chesapeake from McHenry to the James and Elizabeth rivers, and even beyond, to the old town of Portsmouth.

At the present time, in the vicinity of the mouth of James river, and the opening from the Chesapeake to the ocean beyond, are such places of modern note as Sewall's Point, Craney Island, Newport News, Hampton and Norfolk. Fortress Monroe, now the most conspicuous in this catalogue, was then unprojected, while the "Rip Raps," and the water bounding it, now termed "Hampton Roads," was unknown to fame. In this vicinity, at the date of our story, there was little to attract the attention of the adventurer. One might sail up the little Hampton bay, or harbor, and, where stood that flourishing village before the annihilating fire of 1862, not even a settler's cabin, a fisherman's hut, or an Indian's wigwam, could be seen. Old Point Comfort was a barren waste. Sewall's Point and Newport News could boast of a few isolated habitations. But in every other direction, nothing but a dense forest was presented to the eye. Nature reposed in her primeval grandeur, and her solitude preserved their peace.

The Nansemond is a short but deep river, running at right angles with the James, both of which empty into the bay at the same point. The former stream was considered of so little importance by the British cruisers that they never had attempted to ascend it. And for this very reason it had become the favorite resort of many patriots driven by the fortunes—or, rather, the misfortunes—of the war, from their homes on the banks of the James, and along the coast to the north. The stream was not settled, however, along its banks, for a distance of some six miles from its mouth, in which intervals rude but formidable breastworks had been thrown up, for offensive and defensive operations, as the case might require, for the inhabitants above had resolved to make their would-be conquerors pay dearly for their pains, should attempts be made to molest them. They were fully organized, and well, although variously, armed; and, having learned, from sad experience, what mercy to expect from a merciless foe, the refugees were ever ready to fight, but not to submit.

It was a clear night in June. The settlers of the "Cove," a village of about eighty inhabitants, were gathered upon the river's bank, watching the approach of *two* vessels. Considerable interest was manifested, and one or two proposed that the works should be manned at once, in case of danger.

"'Tain't no use, Joe Birch. Don't you see our little Dolphin's in the lead—that her guns are all right, too? She's got another prize, sure. She brought in a transport *only* night before last, and now, by hooky, she's got another."

"Jim Burns," replied the person addressed as Birch, "yer 'pinion is allers first chop, but yer out a bit here."

"How so, Joe?"

"Why, I think yer eyes must be in a glimmer. That's a war-craft, and twice as big as Dolly. Jist see the size of her nose as she comes pokin' up-stream, and the upper rig. It's a man-of-war's-man, or my name ain't Birch."

The Dolphin, or "Dolly," as she was familiarly called, was a vessel of only about two hundred tons burden. She was Baltimore built, and, had it not been for her sharp, rakish appearance, and her clean, heavy sails, she might easily have been mistaken for a coasting or fisherman's craft. She was owned by the inhabitants of the Nansemond, and, for some

time past, had been employed as a privateer, to experience remarkable success. Her fleetness had enabled her to escape from many positions of danger, yet always, even in moments of great exposure, inflicting with her long-range stern gun, mortal wounds upon the enemy. Whenever closely pressed, the schooner made directly for the mouth of the James river, and reaching it, would suddenly round a point, striking into the Nansemond, where she would soon find a port of safety. The enemy often had continued their search far up the James, but of course without success. Only two nights previous to the event now described, the Dolly had captured a valuable transport, with arms, ammunition and provisions. This craft was then safely moored in the "Cove" harbor.

"By the Continental Congress, Jim, you are right. But, don't you see that our boys are in charge of the big craft, and that they are giving us signals that it's all on the straight? And look! If there don't go up the 'red, white and blue,' then I'm a Tory. Give her three cheers, boys; and you, gals, jist open your throats too. 'Twon't do ye a bit of harm."

The "gals" appeared well convinced of this fact, for they joined most lustily with the boys. The forests echoed with their wild huzzas, while the cheering was returned with equal vigor from the vessel's decks.

The little Dolly now rounded gracefully into the snug harbor, followed by the other craft. She was a fine vessel of about six hundred tons burden, and mounted with four long-range guns fore and aft, and one pivot-gun amidships. As those on shore saw this, and became satisfied that the vessel was indeed a prize, they gave vent to the most extravagant evidences of their delight. Cheer after cheer was given for the Dolly and her noble captain, ALBERTO NANSEMOND. After quiet had been restored, a voice from the captured vessel was heard to exclaim:

"T'ink ye might pay some 'tention to de cap'n ob *this* ere craf'!"

All eyes were turned upon the speaker, to behold nothing further than a woolly head, a face black as night, a mouth of wonderful capacity, with teeth white and glistening, while the eyes, which rivaled them in brightness, were rolling about as

if watching the movements of all on shore. The entire body was concealed behind the bulwark of the vessel.

"Who is the captain of that craft?" asked fifty voices.

"Why, dis ere chile, Samuel Josephus Adolphus Mason, what isn't a mason at all, but a nigger as knows more'n any brick-and-mortar 'prentice," and the darkey stretched himself up to his greatest hight. A boisterous laugh followed.

"What de mischief ye all yah-yahin' about? Jis' you be peaceable, you land-lubbers as don't fight, or by 'thority in me vested, I'll make powder-monkeys out ob ebery one ob ye de berry next time I take my vessel out to meet dem Britishers."

Sam was a general favorite with all the settlers, and was allowed to do and say pretty much as he pleased, especially as he never took advantage of this leniency to get "above his station." Of course every one on this occasion knew that the negro was indulging in a little self-glorification, and they had no doubt that when they heard the particulars of the capture, they would find that he had taken such an active part in it, that he really was entitled to a large amount of credit. Sam had exhibited more than an ordinary amount of courage on more than one occasion, and was a favorite of Captain Nansemond, who, himself, although a stern commander, when with the boys at home threw aside all authority, and became the gayest among the gay. He was very fond of hearing the negro expatiate upon his own exploits. Sam was never inclined to underestimate his acts, and his imagination, or his intentional exaggeration, sometimes painted them in very glowing colors. Nansemond now stepped forward upon the deck of the Dolphin, and said:

"Boys, you see the prize I bring you; that is, not I alone but my brave men here. A nobler work they have never accomplished, nor have they ever acted in a braver manner. Not among the least of them is our friend Sam. He always has been brave and faithful, but on this occasion he added to that bravery the most important service. He will himself relate the particulars of the capture, and of his own exploits. Sam, step forward."

The negro came forward amid deafening cheers, and mounted the bulwarks. After silence had been restored, he said:

"T'ank ye, t'ank ye, fr'en's, for dis combined and cheerin' exhibishum of your nat'ral explosibe demonstrashums. Samuel Joseph Adolphus Mason, what ain't a mason *no how*, hab done his duty and nuffin more, an' if ebery true-born Virginian won't do all ob *dat*, if he's a nigger he ain't worf a Dutch cheese, an' if he's white he hadn't ou'ter fotch half ob *dat* sum." Three rousing cheers followed this burst of patriotism.

"Now, jus' hold yer breff, fr'en's and feller sojers, an' I'll gib ye all de partic'lar details jus' as dey all happened, and no mistake. Ye see, when we went out to de mouf ob de river, de wind was blowin' jus' about a forty-four-knot breeze. It wasn't quite dark yet, an' so de cap'n t'ink we better wait a bit. So, as de wind was blowin' so hard, de cap'n he gib me de word ob command, an' so I jus' ordered de men to take in de gaff, and de boom, and all de rest ob de mizzen sheets, which order was promptly obeyed. I knew all 'bout de ship we was arter. I knew de cap'n had an ole nig on board, jus' like me. I spied *dat* out in de daytime. So cap'n he gib me a boat. I tole him when he see'd a light on de deck ob de Britisher, to cum right along. It got to be as dark as dis nigga's hide, an' so I jus' jump inter de little boat, an' went along jus' as still as a darkey after possum, an' I got under de stern ob de vessel widout a libin' soul hearin' me. Den I listen and hear hard brevin' on de deck. Says I to dis chile, if *dat* Britisher don't wake up berry soon, he'll find hissself on de road to some place where dey don't hab any t'ing but brinstone for fodder. Now, jus' listen. Dis chile crawl up a rope an' walk up to de man what was sleepin'. 'What you want, you nigga?' he says. I didn't jus' like his speakin' so consequential, but I hab to swallow de insult. What do ye t'ink I done?"

"What? What?" cried the excited crowd, who had become deeply interested in the narrative.

"'Now look a-heah,' says I. 'If ye call de cap'n's cullud man a nigga again, I shan't gib ye de brandy I fotch up.' 'Oh, King George,' says he, 'gib it to me, quick.' So I gib him de bottle. I knew *dat* would fix *him*. So I lef' him and went for'ard to t'other guard. He talk 'bout de same to me, but I soon settle him wid another bottie ob brandy. It

was only a little while till boff guards was dead drunk. So I gib de signal to massa cap'n, and den I awaited his 'proach. Soon I see'd de vessel comin'. I see'd a light down in de cabin, an' so I jes' went in. De cap'n he go to jump out ob his bed, an' I put a big knife at his t'roat, an' tole him he mus' surrender. He axed 'To whom?' an' I said, 'To de Continental Congress an' de great Jehobah.' Dat was a sticker for de Britisher, but our cap'n come on board jus' den, an' he settled de business. Dat's all. Is ye satisfied? If yc ain't, why jes' go and do it ober for yerselves."

Again rousing cheers were given for Sam. Still standing upon the bulwark, he replied to the cheers of those around him by the most extravagant efforts at making a profound bow. It was too much for his equilibrium, for he lost his footing and fell plump into the water. There he floundered about for a while, but was, at length, drawn to the shore, amid the uproarious glee of the crowd. His dignity, however, had been outraged, and, refusing to speak to those around, he seated himself, silent and moody, upon the ground. Captain Nansemond then stepped forward and said:

"Men, you have been correctly informed with regard to the capture of this vessel, but not all. By the assistance of Sam we were enabled to take the enemy entirely by surprise, and made this capture, which is most important to us. We set all the prisoners free, with the exception of the officers. These I intend to retain as hostages for three of our friends who were seized at their own homes near Portsmouth, and impressed into the British navy. These officers are in the cabin below. And now, with this craft in our possession, we shall be able to strike heavy blows upon the Chesapeake, and even beyond, that our proud enemy will feel. You perceive that the name of our prize is the Spitfire. Shall we rechristen her?"

"Yes! yes!" was the answer.

"What shall she be called?"

"After Lettie, the sunshine of our circle."

"You would call her Lettie, in honor of my daughter?" asked the captain.

"Let the vessel be called by the title we have given your daughter, 'THE PRIDE OF THE NANSEMOND.'"

"I was gwan to suggest dat de bessel be called dat same f'ing, but ye jus' tuk de words rite out ob my mouf."

"Then let us have the christening at once," said the captain.

Miss Lettie Nansemond, daughter of the captain of the Dolly, was a girl of seventeen. She was light-hearted as a child—the pride and the joy of the settlement, and not one of those rude men but would have died in her defense had it been required. She had heard much of the war, but had witnessed none of its horrors. It is true she had occasionally seen her father's vessel arrive and depart, and the report of guns from the "Roads" had reached her ears; now and then she had missed a well-known face, but nothing especial had transpired to cloud the happiness of her young life. Lettie was present, and heard the proposition to name the vessel after herself.

She was led upon the deck when the breaking of a wine-bottle, as is usual in a launch, and other ceremonies, were performed. Then came the dance, the song, the wine, and those enjoyments which are nowhere so well appreciated as in the newly-settled country.

It now became necessary to elect officers for the Dolphin, and Nansemond declared he should take command of the "Pride," adding, that heavy work was before them. The choice of captain for the Dolly fell upon one Owen Randall, a man of quite youthful appearance, but of a resolute character. He was handsome; little wonder, therefore, that Lettie blushed when she found herself selected as chief to act in the installation of that officer. But, every thing went off pleasantly, and the two vessels were soon provided with full crews.

"Come, friends," said Nansemond, "it is now time we get a little rest. We have work before us for to-morrow, that may require all our energies to master."

"'Scuse me, cap'n; reck'n we won't get much rest to-night," now said Sam.

"What do you mean?"

"Jus' cast yer eyes down dat riber, and see what's a-comin'."

"By heavens!—there are two ships of the line approaching. Quick, men, to your guns behind the land-works. Let

these Britons find that they have indeed bearded the lion in his den."

The order was promptly obeyed, and the patriots waited in silence for their foe.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRIDE OF THE NANSEMOND.

It may have been a generous act for Nansemond to release all the prisoners excepting the officers of the Spitfire, but its policy might be questioned. They had been set on shore at the mouth of the river, at a point where they could reach a position near enough to their own vessels to have their signals recognized. When they were taken on board, they not only gave the particulars of the capture, but the fact that the vessel had been taken up the Nansemond and *not* up the James river. Two hours after, two vessels, carrying twelve guns each, were in pursuit of the Dolly and her prize.

For some distance the pursuers found no difficulty in ascending the stream, but, at length, the river grew so narrow and so ribbed with "bars," that great caution was necessary to keep the ships from grounding. Not until they were close upon the harbor of the Cove, did they discover the Dolly and her prize. At the same instant, the guns from the batteries masked upon the shore opened upon the advanced vessel a most galling fire. She attempted to swing around so as to get into a position to return it, but, in the effort, grounded in such a manner that it was found impossible to get an effective range. The second ship saw the trouble but could be of no service, as she was considerably larger. It was evident she could not pass in order to deliver a point-blank fire, while, to attempt to turn would be to encounter the same difficulty. She therefore dropped carefully down the stream, until she found sufficient water and sea-room to extricate herself.

In the mean time, the batteries on shore had been dealing death to those on board the grounded ship. There were not men sufficient on board to attempt an assault upon the

batteries; so, to escape in the best possible manner was the order.

Men and officers dashed over the ship in wild disorder, and fled to the woods, making the best of their way back to the mouth of the river. The war craft thus deserted was quickly boarded by the vigilant patriots, and was found to contain a large amount of stores, munitions, and articles of real value to the people, who had, many of them, suffered from lack of clothing, medicines, etc.

"And now, my men," said Nansemond, "you must listen to my instructions and then act promptly. We have taught the minions of George III a lesson they will not soon forget; but we must follow up the advantage we have gained. I have no doubt the dogs will be down upon us in a swarm to-morrow, from Portsmouth. One advantage we will have: the country is so thickly wooded that they can bring only infantry. But, in a few hours from this time, the mouth of the river will be blockaded so closely that it will be impossible for us to run the gauntlet. But we must not lose all, or any portion of our goods and stores. I know there is not another gun in the whole British fleet now anchored in the roads like the one which swings amidships on the *Pride*. It was mounted on her, and the vessel was sent down from Baltimore expressly to capture the *Dolly*. The only trouble will be to get outside before this blockade is effected. I will run out at once with the *Pride*, and, for a while, run up the James out of sight, while you must remain here, and load the *Dolly* with all the valuables. When this is accomplished, run down to the mouth, and give me the signal by firing a gun. I will then commence a furious attack from above. The enemy will not anticipate it from that quarter, and, for fear of being knocked in pieces by my long ranges, they will probably run back and take shelter under the forts at Craney Island and Old Point. If the soldiers are likely to arrive before you finish the work, double-shot all the guns, and send the *Dolly* on her way. Then give them as many shots as you can before they attempt a charge. After that take to the woods and I will pick you up near the neck."

The *Pride* at once dropped down the river, while the remaining men set to work with a will to carry out the orders.

of their captain. The women were to be removed to another settlement, six miles distant.

This was the first time that Lettie had ever witnessed an actual conflict. She appeared very little disturbed, although, as yet, the firing had all been on one side. But as she was now on board of her father's craft, it was probable she would not remain long in ignorance with regard to a battle at sea. There had not been time to repaint the name of the vessel, or to refit her in any manner. This might, for a time, prove fortunate, as the Spitfire was well known to all the British cruisers in the bay, and, under the old disguise, Nansemond might be able to accomplish a desperate undertaking which he then had in view. But, he did not design long to continue under false colors. He intended to make the Pride of the Nansemond a terror to all the English navy who dared to enter the Chesapeake in a hostile way.

The Pride soon reached the bay below, and found her way apparently clear. She ran up the river, but it was to find the enemy's fleet there before her, and, by the unusual activity on board each vessel, the captain was satisfied that some important movement was on foot. He had no doubt that the blockading of the Nansemond was a part of their programme. Thus he determined to prevent, if possible.

The mists of morning were falling over the waters, and the darkness was of that density which precedes the break of day. Captain Nansemond, on all occasions, was daring—indeed, his bravery amounted almost to recklessness. But, on this occasion, he was held in check, to some extent, by the presence of his daughter. Still, he had determined to fight. Lettie now appeared on deck, and approached her father.

"Child," said the captain, tenderly, "you must go below."

"Why so, dear father?"

"Because the danger is greater upon deck."

"Are you going to attack the enemy?"

"If they attempt to move from their present position, I certainly shall do so. It is my intention to prevent, if possible, the blockading of the river until the Dolly has escaped."

"Where do you intend going after the Dolly joins you?"

"To Baltimore, my child. The press-gang in that city are at work, and I have learned that some of my own friends

have been seized and conveyed either on board some of the war vessels or into the fort. It is my purpose to learn the particulars of these matters, and to keep a close watch upon the movements of the gang. They will find in me an implacable foe."

"Ship ahoy!" came across the water at this moment.

"Ahoy!" answered the captain of the *Pride*.

"What vessel is that?"

"It bears upon the stern the name of *Spitfire*."

"I thought the *Spitfire* was in possession of the Yankees."

"It is in the possession of American freemen."

"Are you not the pirate Nansmond?"

"I am Captain Nansmond. I *did* command the *Dolphin*. I captured the *Spitfire*. She is now the *Pride* of Nansmond; and with her I intend to sweep your royal navy from the bay."

"You boast loudly for a Yankee pirate."

"I will keep my word, and will, besides, teach you royal sculleries good manners."

"Well, to commence with, take that as my appreciation of your character." A flash was seen, followed by a heavy report, and canister rattled among the rigging of the *Pride*.

Nansmond had been on the look-out for this, and had kept as nearly as possible astern of the war-ship, in order to avoid a broadside.

"Go below, Lettie," said her father.

"Yes, golly, Miss Lettie, if ye gets hit it'll spile ebery t'ing. De boys won't want to fight den. Come below, chile, do," said Sam, with a persuasive bow, which, at any other less serious time, would have excited a smile.

"Father, you would have your daughter worthy of you. I do not fear, and I prefer remaining by your side."

"As you please, dear child."

"I golly, dat's a chip ob de ole block, shuah! Now de boys will fight, shuah!" And Sam went off upon duty with a pride of heart which his manner and countenance both betrayed.

The *Pride* was at this moment directly astern of the war-ship, not over eighty yards distant, but entirely out of range of her enemy's side-guns.

"I will return your compliment with my consideration,"

shouted Nansemond, and he let go two of his long guns. The carefully-trained missiles struck square upon the ship's stern, tearing away the outer works, and crashing into the cabin. A jingle of glass, a shriek of agony and cries of terror followed, as the Pride suddenly rounded to, and gave the enemy, in a few moments, the benefit of her other two guns with stunning effect. Ere the British vessel could recover from her surprise, the Pride darted forward, and before her enemy could bring her guns to bear, the daring Nansemond had passed beyond reach of harm from her broadsides.

Nansemond knew that the guns on board his enemy were twenty-four-pound carronades, and would not carry a ball two-thirds the distance that would be reached by his own guns. Nor did he believe there was a long gun on board either of the three ships then riding in the roads below. It was now quite light.

"Put up the helm, Ransom," commanded the captain. This was done, and the Pride gracefully fell off, riding like a top upon the waters.

"Charge the guns carefully. Let me see that each one is properly laid. I want every shot to tell. I do not care needlessly to sacrifice life, but I wish to cripple each one of those ships before they take their position either at the mouth of the river or under the fort. Now, let fly at her rigging. Good!"

A half-dozen shots were fired from each gun, with terrible effect. The main-topmast reeled like a drunken man, and then went by the board, carrying with it topsail, top-gallant-sail, royal, jib and flying-jib—completely strewing the deck with its wreck. The enemy's vessel was, in consequence, rendered perfectly useless.

"Captain," said the old gunner, Ransom, "I'd like to send that fellow on an exploring expedition down among sea-weeds. Just let me give her a tap between wind and water."

"Not yet. Bring up the British officers from the cabin." This was done, and the prisoners came moodily upon deck.

"Good-morning, sirs," said Nansemond, somewhat gayly.

They did not reply, but gazed with a scornful expression upon the captain. Then they cast their eyes upon the water in the direction of their ships. The wreck met their view, and a frown settled upon their faces.

"That is not an agreeable sight to you, I presume, captain," said Nansemond.

"I do not wish to hold converse with a Yankee pirate," replied the British officer, in a tone of commingled insolence and anger.

"Oh, as you please," responded Nansemond. "Ransom, you may tap that craft two or three times. Finish up the cabin. Then we'll open a vent on her water-line and send her to the fishes."

No further orders were needed, and three shot struck the ship, making the splinters fly in every direction.

"It is barbarous to fire upon a crippled vessel," said the British officer.

"I understood you to say that you did not wish to hold converse with a Yankee pirate," remarked Nansemond, with a look of scorn mantling his features.

"Sometimes we are *forced* to address even the savage."

"Fire away, Ransom."

"Ay, ay, sir!" and bang went the guns, one ball cutting away the shattered bulwark, leaving the deck all exposed to view. It was strewn with dead.

"There is a female in the cabin of that vessel," said the Englishman.

"Indeed! Stop a moment, Ransom. I presume it is the captain's wife?" No reply was made.

"Fire away, Ransom. Give her one this time just below the water-mark."

"Stay. It is an American woman," replied the Englishman.

"A captive?"

"I think so."

"Captain, that other fellow is bearing down upon us. Shall I speak to him?"

"All right. Ask him to show his royal breeding, and perhaps after a while we shall be able to discover good manners somewhere in the fleet."

The second vessel had weighed anchor, and came cautiously forward, evidently intending to assist the wreck, rather than attack the Pride. She was, however, within range of the long midship gun, and Ransom put into her several shots which made her reel. The third vessel was also now in motion. It

was evidently the intention of this craft to get between the *Pride* and the mouth of the Nansemond. She was moving cautiously around, when the captain saw the *Dolly* emerging from the river and coming gracefully forward. She at once saw the condition of affairs, and her crew set up the most enthusiastic cheering, which was answered with a will from the decks of the *Pride*.

Nansemond saw that the third vessel of the foe could not intercept his consort, but he was surprised when he heard the report of a heavy gun, and a shot from the enemy fell close by his side. A smile of satisfaction played around the lips of the Englishman.

"Oh, that's your game, is it? Got a Long-Tom aboard, eh? Well, I'll give *you* a little attention. Ransom, can you reach that fellow?"

"Yes. I can send a ball into him if he was a quarter of a mile further from us."

"Well, he can scarcely reach us now. Give her a few shots." This was done.

The *Dolly* now came up. She reported to have secured all the valuables, fired the grounded war-ship, having first hove overboard the guns, that they might be fished up when wanted. A body of British infantry arrived in time just to see the saucy little schooner move off. A consultation was held, which resulted in the following questions being propounded to the Englishman.

"Who is the female on board that vessel?"

"An American prisoner."

"Why is it that you have a *female* prisoner?"

"I have none."

"Then why is it that there is one on board *that* vessel?"

"I presume it is the captain's humor."

"In what manner did he succeed in gaining possession of her?"

"You had better ask him."

"You had better answer my questions directly, or I will batter those ships in pieces, as well as punish your insolence. I'll have none of it, sir, so just put on your good manners, if you've got any."

"I will," replied the Englishman, with a malignant smile

"The father of the girl was a rebel living in Baltimore. The captain conceived an especial liking for the beauty, and so he had the father and herself seized and brought on board his vessel. The *father* is now, or soon will be, one of his majesty's sailors, and will remain so, until the girl is more reasonable. There are Yankees on each of those ships, and if you destroy them, your own people will suffer with them."

Captain Nansemond was perplexed. He did not doubt the truth of this assertion. He could not approach within range of the ship's guns, as a single broadside would sink him, and to batter them in pieces at a distance, would be to destroy those unfortunates on board. But his action in the matter was now decided by the appearance of three vessels at the mouth of the Elizabeth river. They resembled the *Pride* in size. They had heard the cannonading, and had come down from Portsmouth to render any assistance that might be required.

Nansemond did not wish to risk an engagement with such odds; so the two patriot vessels threw their full canvas to the stiff breeze, and dashed forward for the bay. A chase began, but the enemy could not compete with the *Pride* or *Dolly*, and the two "pirates" arrived safely at their destination near Baltimore. They were run into a little cove which was so thickly surrounded by immense trees as to afford a complete shelter and place of concealment. Every nook and corner of these waters, so full of inlets and creek harbors, was known to Nansemond; so he had only to choose his place of safety.

CHAPTER III.

THE NIGHT ADVENTURE.

On the night subsequent to the arrival of Nansemond and his friends near Baltimore, a little boat, containing three men and a female, shot forth from the concealed harbor, and struck directly across the little bay which bounds the southern portion of the city. Not a word was spoken, and the darkness

was so intense that it must have required a close observation to detect even the presence of the parties. Indeed, they had not reached the point for which they were evidently steering, before the rain began to fall in torrents, and the wind blew in squalls of occasional fury, while the black clouds rolled and trembled madly in the sky. It was an unpleasant exposure for the adventurers.

"This is not especially agreeable," remarked one of the party, "but the darkness will favor our purpose."

"I think not, Captain Randall," replied a voice, which we at once recognize to be that of Alberto Nansemond.

"Will not the deserted condition of the streets be an advantage to us?" asked Randall.

"No. It is at such times that the press-gang ply their villainous work."

"Why then more than at any other time? I am sure the military hold such despotic sway here that they can do *any thing* they wish, even in broad daylight, without any citizen daring to interfere."

"You are in error. The gang have been injudicious recently by the seizure of several prominent citizens, and the people are thoroughly aroused. Several collisions have already taken place, and all classes unite in denouncing this barbarous practice of impressment. The people have leagued themselves to resist the brutal seizure. The usurper is not comfortable in Baltimore; and, were it not for the fort which commands the city, there would not be a red-coat left within it in two hours. It is *only* when the streets are nearly deserted that free citizens are captured by the minions of King George."

"Will it be policy for us to proceed to-night?" asked Randall.

"Captain Randall, it is not my custom to hesitate simply because danger is likely to be encountered."

"Nor mine, sir," replied Randall, proudly. "I was not thinking of myself, but of your daughter."

"You are considerate, and I thank you. What says Lettie? Shall we return to the Pride?"

"Not on *my* account, dear father. But I fear harm will come to you and Owen—Captain Randall, I mean."

"It is our trade to face danger; and it is only by doing so

that we can accomplish important results. My first object is to place you in a safe position, and then I shall be free to act. The deck, or even the cabin, of a war-craft is not the place for a female."

"Oh, father, I think it is glorious! To stand upon the deck, to see the flash of the guns, to hear the report, and then listen to the missile as it flies shrieking through the air. And to see the haughty foe haul down their flag and surrender to the little Yankee privateer. Oh, it's such a pleasure to a patriot heart," and Lettie clapped her hands in very ecstasy.

"But you have as yet seen but *one* side, my child. You must bear in mind that we had the advantage all upon our side, because the enemy could not reach us with his guns. Suppose he could have done so, and our deck had been covered with the dead and dying?"

"I would have assisted in caring for the wounded."

"But if we had been *defeated*. If *we* had been compelled to haul down *our* flag. How would *you* have felt?"

"I would have set the vessel on fire before I would have surrendered her to the enemy!"

"Brave girl. But what would *you* have done?"

"Trusted myself to the water rather than to the crue. mercy of our base-minded and relentless oppressors."

They had now reached the land. The point where they landed was that just south of where the Washington depot now stands. It was at that time thickly covered with a small undergrowth, and half or three quarters of a mile from the outskirts of the city. There was no guard in that direction. The little bay was so shallow that not even the smallest vessel could pass through its waters with safety, unless thoroughly acquainted with the tortuous channel. The boat was drawn into a place of concealment, and our friends took their way toward the city.

"Sam," said Captain Nansemond, addressing the silent and abstracted negro, "you will follow Captain Randall as his attendant. Don't venture to speak, no matter what occurs. If you are required to *act*, you will know it. And, recollect, while we are in Baltimore, that you do not call me by name or address either of us as Randall or as captain."

"I'se num as an oyster, massa, only it'll be mighty hard work."

Nansemond took the hand of his daughter and led her forward, while Randall and the negro followed a short distance in the rear. At length they reached the city. The rain had nearly ceased, but the streets were deserted and gloomy. It was near the hour of twelve. The adventurers passed along up Charles street, meeting with not the slightest interruption. Just as Nansemond and his daughter had reached Baltimore street, they were confronted by a soldier. He did not speak for a few moments, but stood close to the travelers, peering into their faces. At length he said:

"By Jove, that's a pretty girl. Out rather late for respectable folks."

Nansemond stepped aside as if to pass the soldier, when the latter placed his sword-point against the captain's breast, and said:

"Halt! Must have an explanation before I let you go."

"And if I don't choose to give it?"

"Then I shall call a comrade, send you to the guard-house, and take possession of the gal myself."

Randall and the negro had crept close to the parties unseen, and were concealed by the darkness. They heard the last remark of the soldier, and Sam sprung forward, but was seized by Randall.

"Wait until the proper moment arrives," he whispered.

"Ain't it de proper moment *now*?" asked Sam. "Golly, but I jist wants to stretch my arm against dat white-livered dog's head!"

"I'll give you the word."

"Be quick, massa, for it's hard to wait. Knock dat soja on de head, shuah as my name isn't Mason."

"What do you wish?" asked Nansemond of the soldier

"First to know who you are."

"My name is Alberto."

"Where do you live?"

"On the hill, only about five hundred yards from here."

"What kept you out so late?"

"We have been to see a sick friend."

"Where?"

"In the lower part of the city."

"Have you got a pass?"

"I am too well known to require such a thing."

"How long would it require you to walk from the place where you have been to this spot?"

"Perhaps twenty minutes or half an hour."

"Then where the devil did you get so wet? It has not rained any for half an hour."

"It rained as we were going down."

"Why did you not take a carriage, or, at least, an umbrella?"

"I am tired of this questioning. Will you allow me to go on about my business?"

"Well," replied the soldier, "I rather suspect that things are not all just right, so I'll tell you what I'll do. It is not very far to the place where you say you live, so I'll just go with you and see if it's all right. If it is *not*, why I'll have *that* petticoat."

The soldier stood, during this time, at a little distance from Nansemond, with his sword presented, ready for any hostile movement. In his left hand he also held a pistol. The captain might have sent a bullet through him by suddenly drawing his own weapon, but he knew the report would cause an alarm, and this he wished to avoid. Besides, the death of a soldier when on post always creates excitement. For his purposes, the captain wished the city to remain as quiet as possible during his stay. But he had not a moment to lose, for not far distant down the street he heard the measured tread of what he supposed to be the approaching guard-relief.

Randall also heard it, and came to the conclusion that the proper moment had arrived. Sam appeared to think the same, for he sprung lightly forward and gave the soldier a terrible blow upon the head with a heavy horseman's pistol, which felled him to the earth without even so much as a groan.

"Quick!" exclaimed Nansemond; and they passed rapidly on toward their destination.

"Guess I'll take dat sojer's shooter; lawful prize!" exclaimed Sam, as he picked up the weapon.

The captain and his friends had proceeded perhaps a

hundred rods when they heard the report of musketry behind them. There were three distinct volleys.

"That is a signal to the guard throughout the city that the Yankees are around," said Randall. "If you hear another volley soon it means that a guard has been killed. Yes, there it is. Sam did his work thoroughly. You will now hear a volley in reply from every guard-station. We shall have to look sharp now; but we are safe, as yonder is my father's mansion, and we are not yet observed. Great heavens, what is the meaning of that?"

But a short distance before them he saw a sheet of flame, and heard the report of the volley, which announced it to be a guard-post.

"My father's dwelling turned into a British barrack! What can it mean?"

"Perhaps *your* father, too, has been arrested, and his property confiscated to the crown."

"It must be so. Oh, my dear parent—my unprotected sister!"

"Are you sure that volley was from your dwelling?"

"Certain of it. You see there is but one building standing in that open space."

"By heavens!" exclaimed Nansemond, "there is a patrol leaving the house, and I can hear the tramp of soldiers in the opposite direction. Quick! Let us enter the basement-way, and conceal ourselves until the guard pass." In an instant our friends were in the area, shut from view of those passing in the street by the stairs ascending to the front door of the house.

"We are safe for a time now," exclaimed Randall, "but only for a short time I fear, as the guard will be on the search soon."

"Father, we must prepare to fight at once. Give me a weapon and I will do my part."

"What do you mean, Lettie?"

"That I distinctly saw a face at the window above us, and it was watching us."

"Get your weapons ready. Let us die like men rather than be taken by those merciless cut-throats."

"Golly! Dat shootin'-iron I captured comes fust-rate now

Dis chile make one Britisher's head ache, shuah—perhaps two, as I's good at frowin'."

"I heard them close the window above just now. Perhaps they take us for parties who are trying to escape the press-gang, and will not expose us to the soldiers."

"Hush, honeys. Don't speak above yer breff. Come in chil'en. Don't be skeered. Dar's no 'casion."

In the darkness the speaker could not be seen. But it was the voice and accent of a woman of color. It came from the basement hall, the door of which had been cautiously opened. Our friends were about to enter, but two squads of soldiers had met at that moment upon the walk exactly in front of the step under which the party was concealed. It was most likely if they attempted to pass into the hall they would be discovered, and no doubt captured. They therefore kept their places, and overheard the following conversation:

"What's the row below?"

"Oh, the furies to pay. Another guard killed by an infernal Yankee assassinator."

"Killed—on guard?"

"Well, no, not exactly killed, but so near it, that it's pretty much the same thing."

"How did it happen?"

"Oh, the poor dog is too badly hurt to tell much about it. He says he met a man with a gal, and while he was talking with them, some one came up behind him and tapped him on the head. He says that he will know the man and gal again if he ever sees them."

"Well, what's orders?"

"To scout around. The Thugs must be somewhere near."

"Yes, maybe; but they'll find plenty of shelter. This city is full of infernal rebels, and all they've got to do when they kill a guard, is to pop into the first house they come across, and be safe from arrest. If I had my way I'd banish the whole of them."

"Well, the General has begun a good work, and I hope he'll keep at it. Old Randall and his family in limbo—just where they ought to have been a month ago, for he was a prince among the traitors and spies here. He was not molested, however, until it was found out that his son had joined

that bloody scoundrel, the pirate Nansemond. Joe Miller, who escaped when the Dove was captured, distinctly saw him on board the Dolphin, the pirate's little schooner, which they do say can run anywhere where it is damp."

"That Nansemond is a very fiend. The whole navy is afraid of him. When he finds out that his old governor is a prisoner, he'll raise the town—you may bet on that!"

"Ah, old Nansemond caught too? How did they trap the old bird?"

"The old rogue was here sailing under false colors. Called himself Johnson. But he was recognized and will hang as a spy."

An ejaculation was heard from below. It came from Lettie, who had overheard every word of the conversation. She loved her grandfather devotedly, and in a moment of forgetfulness she uttered an exclamation of horror.

"What's that?" exclaimed one of the soldiers. "It was a woman's voice near us. Some she spy, I suppose."

It was a moment of suspense, but the ready wit of the negress saved them. She stepped out to the iron railing which inclosed the area, and said:

"De good Lord bress ye, chil'en. Dar's a lady berry sick in dis house, and ole missus says won't ye go on a little bit cos de talkin' hurts de bressed chile's head."

"Child sick, eh! Well, let's move on, boys." This was done, and our friends entered the house.

They were led through the hall, which was perfectly dark, and soon reached an upper room. A dim light was burning, by which our friends were enabled to distinguish the form of a female, but could not see any thing further. A kind voice requested them to be seated.

"I presume," said the lady, "that I have the honor of entertaining those who love the cause of liberty?"

"You have, madam," answered Nansemond, in a tone of agreeable surprise.

"And perhaps those who are suffering in common with thousands of our countrymen?"

"Never until to-night did I know how much cause for personal feeling I have in this matter, although I have always felt the deepest interest in the patriot cause, while my sympathies

have been strongly with those who have directly suffered. May I ask to whom we are indebted for the timely aid we have received?"

"My name is Mrs. Welland. My late husband was a captain in the patriot army."

"Captain John Welland, of the sloop-of-war Powhatan?"

"The same."

"I knew your husband well. I am Captain Alberto Nansemond."

The lady sprung to her feet and advanced to the captain, grasping his hands in a cordial manner. The others were introduced, and it was not long before a perfect understanding seemed to be had between them. It was arranged that Lettie should remain as the companion of Mrs. Welland.

CHAPTER IV.

MORE WORK PLANNED.

CAPTAIN NANSEMOND found that he had more work on hand, and of a different character from that he had first contemplated. But it was difficult to decide where or in what manner to commence. He must endeavor to learn where his father was confined, and also to procure the same information with regard to the Randalls. He dared not make inquiries as the city was filled with spies and British sympathizers, who immediately reported to head-quarters any conversation that assumed any thing like a treasonable aspect. Simply asking for a known rebel or a suspected man, would be deemed sufficient cause for arrest. He determined to be governed according to circumstances, and a mind as fertile as his own could not be long in devising some means for successful action.

The breakfast was over. Sam had been regaling himself in the kitchen, and appeared quite attached to this department, as well as the negress, Eliza, who had been of such service the night before, to himself and friends.

"Captain Randall," said Nansemond, after having remained

in deep thought for some time, "I am about to place in your hands an important mission. Will you accept it?"

"Any thing desperate or dangerous? If so I am quite ready."

"You must not delay for a single hour. You are sufficiently disguised to pass through the city unknown, and it is not in daylight that the soldiers are on the look-out for spies. You will not be molested. Go at once to the spot where we left the little boat, and proceed to the vessels. Take the *Pride of the Nansemond*, with a crew of one hundred and fifty men, and run as rapidly as possible down the Chesapeake. Do not fire upon any of the English ships unless it be in self-defense. When you reach the roads, run directly outside into the ocean. You will find a small cove near a little island on the Virginia shore, which will afford you excellent shelter. Your business must be to prevent vessels of every description from either entering or leaving the bay. If any attempt it, *compel* a surrender. Then send the men on shore in boats, release any of our men who may be found on board, and fire the craft, after helping yourself to such articles as you require. Place the former captain of the *Pride* on board of the *Dolphin*. He may be of service to me. Take the lieutenant with you. Keep all officers whom you are enabled to capture. You will find nothing so fleet as the vessel you will command. But be sure and have another boat left at the same spot where we concealed the one last night."

"And you, captain?"

"I shall remain in this city until I learn something of my father and your friends. I more than half suspect that it was your sister who was a prisoner on board the ship which I tore in pieces with my guns. If it was, and the prisoner captain knows any thing about it, he shall confess if I have to wring that confession from him by torture. Do not fear but that I shall feel the same interest and use the same exertion for the recovery of your friends as my own."

"I do not doubt it, captain."

"After I have accomplished all I wish here, I will join you. But do not venture an attack in the bay unless I am with you, or you are certain of success, and that your sister or parents are *not* on board the vessel you attack."

Nansemond then went to the room below for the evident purpose of giving some instructions to the negro. Captain Randall and Lettie Nansemond were left alone.

Those two young hearts had suffered, and mutual sympathy had bound them closely together. Each knew the other's love. It had been breathed forth, not only by the most endearing and impassioned words, a thousand times, as they had been seated beneath the spreading branches of the forest kings which lined the border of the peaceful Nansemond, but each fond *heart* had whispered to the other in utterances which no human tongue could syllable.

"And you are going from me, Owen," whispered Lettie, as her head bent upon his breast.

"You heard your father's instructions, dear Lettie."

"I can not bear to have you leave me, Owen."

"And why not, Lettie? I have been from you a hundred times, and never before have I heard you express yourself in such a manner."

"I never realized the danger through which you were passing until I had seen, and to some extent shared it with you. And as I think of this, Owen, I don't know how it is, but I feel that I can not part with you. If I was by your side I should be happier. Let me go with you."

"Oh, Lettie!" exclaimed Randall, "you must not think of such a thing. I could not do my duty if you were by my side."

"That is very unkind of you to say so, Owen."

"No, Lettie, for I will tell you the reason. As every shot came hissing toward the Pride, I should turn pale and tremble with fear, not from personal danger, but fear that you might be harmed."

"Will you not keep beyond the range of the enemy's guns?"

"That is impossible to say. I shall endeavor to do so, as it is your father's wishes. But you forget your father. He has much to accomplish here, and will need your presence to comfort him."

At that moment one of the regimental bands struck up, and the sweet strains came floating upon the morning air, filling the room where our lovers sat with melody. Randall

frowned bitterly. For some moments Lettie appeared lost in a pleasant reverie, and, as she bent her head upon her lover's shoulder, an almost heavenly smile played around her lips, while her eyes beamed forth the languor which filled her soul. At length the music ceased, and Lettie, lifting her eyes to those of her lover, said :

“ Is not that beautiful, Owen ? ”

He did not reply, and Lettie for the first time observed the frown which had settled upon his face.

“ Why, Owen, dear, what is the matter ? Do you not love music ? ”

“ Yes, Lettie.”

“ Then why do you frown ? ”

“ What right have they to play ‘ *God save the king* ? ’ ” exclaimed Randall, bitterly.

“ It is their national air, Owen.”

“ I know it is ; but, let them play it at home. They are now in *my own house*, as well as in my native city. They have no right there. They have seized my father, mother and sister, dragged them from their homes, and for no other reason than that they loved the name of liberty ; and now the minions of King George occupy the home they have ravaged, and yet—oh, mockery !—they *dare* to play ‘ *God save* ’ him. I remember the last time I listened to music in that dwelling. It was the voice of my dear sister Rosie, mingled with the notes of the harpsichord. And when I think of this, and the uncertainty of the fate which hangs over those I love, is it a wonder that my heart is filled with bitterness ? ”

“ No, Owen ; it is only a wonder to me that you can be so patient. But the time will surely come when the usurper will be driven forth.”

“ Yes, and I must now to my task. Give me one fond kiss, Lettie, a single word of encouragement, and I shall go forth with a strong heart. I shall return to you again, dear Lettie—return under happier skies.”

Lettie clung to her lover for an instant, and her warm lips were pressed to his own. She then said :

“ Go, dear Owen, but I feel that I shall join you soon. When the war-cloud breaks, and the sun of liberty shines forth

clear and brilliant, then I would be by your side that I may join in the wild shout of our comrades which will make the waters dance with joy, and even the fishes sing the song of freedom. Oh, Owen, think of it—AMERICA FREE!”

“I golly, dat’s de talk. Yankee Doodle for eber an’ eber, amen!”

“Sam, why did you enter this room unannounced?” asked Randall.

“Who de name of sence would come ahead an’ ’nounce me?”

“Why did you not knock?”

“Cos de door was wide open. But don’t be skeered, Cap’n Randall. I’s been at it too, an’ massa cap’n cotch me, he did—yah-yah-yah!”

“Been at what, Sam?”

“Kissin’—kissin’, sah! Oh, golly! honey’s nowhar; nor de melasses barrel—no sah!” and Sam rolled up the white of his eyes, and wriggled about in very ecstasy.

“Who have you been kissing, Sam? The cat?”

“Oh, you go long. T’ink colod folks can’t distinguish demselves wid luxuries well as white uns?”

“No doubt, Sam. But who were you kissing? Let us know,” said Randall, smiling.

“My ’fianced.”

“Your affianced! I thought you were not acquainted in Baltimore.”

“Got ’quainted last night. I mean ’Liza, de cook down stairs—de gal dat let us in last night.”

“And are you engaged to her so soon?”

“Yas, we’s linked our futur’ destiny, shuah. So when dis war is ober, and, as Miss Lettie jes’ express herself, ‘when de waters ob de Chesapeake jump and cut de pigeon-wing to de une ob Yankee Doodle, an’ de fishes come up to see what’s de matter, and den jine de chorus,’ Miss ’Liza an’ myself am to be jined in de holy ban’s ob bigamy.”

“Matrimony you mean, Sam.”

“Wal, it’s all de same, I s’pose, to us niggas. But, we knows what’s good, anyhow, if we can’t jis’ speak de dicshunary names.”

“Come, Captain Randall, you are losing time. You have heavy work before you.”

"Adieu, friends." Randall left the house.

"That is a noble fellow," said Nansemond, as Randall departed. "Don't *you* think so, Lettie?"

"I ought to think highly of my future husband," answered Lettie, promptly. Still, she blushed.

"Hay-day! So-so! This comes of taking young girls into battle. It makes them strong-minded, and they contract alliances without consulting their parents."

"Father, this is a land of *liberty* now!" replied Lettie archly.

"Still we must have rulers."

"True, father; but we claim the right of suffrage now. We *elect* our rulers!"

"Well, am *I* not your governor-elect?"

"No, father, by *hereditary descent*. Captain Randall has been *elected* by *my* unanimous vote."

"What is this? Rebellion?"

"Not rebellion, but revolution, father."

"Rebellion, I say. I must put it down."

"If you attempt force, I shall at once proceed to raise my armies for resistance."

"Where will you commence?"

"Sam," said Lettie, as she turned toward the negro, who sat grinning in the corner, "will you enlist in my cause?"

"Alers fight on le side ob liberty. 'Sides, I hab a special sympathy dis mor in'. I's in lub myself—yah-yah-yah!"

"I thought so, Sam, when I entered the kitchen. Well, Lettie, you have the largest army. I expect I shall be compelled to consent to your wishes."

"Dear father, you *have* consented a thousand times. You never gazed upon me when I have been so happy with Owen, that you did not smile consent."

"Ay, and blessings, too, dear child. I am most happy to see *you* so. I esteem Randall highly. He is generous and brave. And now you may join Mrs. Welland. I have directions for Sam."

Lettie kissed her father, and left the room.

"Now, Sam," said Nansemond, "I have important work for you—that which will require all your cunning and devotion. I have always found you faithful."

"An' alers will, while dar's breff in dis chile. What is de work? Jis' name it, an' I's into it, like Jonah in de wale's belly."

"I want you to go through the city, and endeavor to ascertain where they have taken my father and the Randall family. They are probably still in the city, and must be discovered. Be very careful what questions you ask, for suspicion is easily aroused. You must sing and dance, and this will amuse the soldiers to such an extent that you will often be able to gain admission to their quarters. You must *pretend* to be a true friend of King George. If you are questioned with regard to who you are, recollect that you belong to Mrs. Welland. Here is a pass for you."

"'T'ank ye, massa, for dis exhibishum ob yer confidence. I'll show you, an' Miss Liza, too, dat Sam is good for some-thin' if he is berry much colod. It isn't de whitest nigga dat is de knowingest—no sah. I'll jis' prove dat, I will."

"That is all, Sam."

The colored lover proceeded to the kitchen and indulged in one more "luxury," and then left the house.

CHAPTER V.

THE NEGRO'S STRATEGY.

CAPTAIN NANSEMOND bent his head upon his hands and remained a long time apparently buried in deep thought. He was startled by the sound of voices in the room below that in which he was sitting. He listened attentively, and was soon convinced that the voices were those of drunken soldiers, in altercation with women.

"I tell ye it's no use. Blost my heyes, don't *hi* know ye? Wasn't yer bloody 'usband ha blosted Yankee rebel? Blost 'is hies."

"Ya-a-s," chimed in another; "didn't he commanl the blosted pirate Velland, blost 'is heycæ! Ve's found ye out, ve have—split me!"

"Yes, and you're hour lawful prize, has hit was hus that first spotted ye. So hi'll take possession hov this gal, hand leave the hold one, hor the nigger, for Tim."

"A nigga! Oh, disgusting, blast me if 'ain't. I nevva could endure a nigga—split me!"

The first ruffian had advanced to seize Lettie, but the negress had given him such a blow upon the head with a chair, that he staggered back and nearly fell to the floor.

Lettie took advantage of this and bounded through the door, up the stairs to her father's room. The villain was in no way injured, and, as soon as he recovered his equilibrium, dashed after the girl, exclaiming, as he did so:

"Not yet, my beauty. You're too valuable a prize to lose." He caught the maiden just as she entered the room. But he released her, and fell heavily to the floor. Nansemond had dealt him a heavy blow upon the head with the butt of a heavy pistol, which scattered his brains in every direction.

Without waiting for further words, he started for the room below. A queer sight met his gaze as he entered. The negress, Eliza, had clinched with the soldier addressed as Tim, and both were struggling upon and rolling over the floor. Nansemond saw at a glance that only *two* soldiers were in the house, so he concluded to let the negress satisfy her revenge.

"I teach ye! I teach ye to cum in a 'spectable house an' 'sturb de ladies, ye mis'erable white trash!"

"Let go! Let go my throat—blost me—you'll strangle me—stop your scratching—split me!" yelled the soldier.

"Yah, I'll split ye." And Eliza began pummeling him in the face in a fearful manner. His howlings were so terrific that Nansemond feared they would be heard in the street. He therefore motioned the negress, and she released the man. Tim sprung to his feet and drew his sword, and was about to rush upon the black. He had not discovered Nansemond, who now stepped before him.

"Who are you?" asked the soldier, in a trembling voice.

"Have you never met me before?"

"Ye—that is, no, I think not."

"Well, I will tell you who I am, if you will answer me one question. Did you ever hear of Captain Alberto Nansemond, the privateer of the Chesapeake?"

"Ye-e-e-s!"

"Did you ever see him?"

"Ye-s, I think so."

"I am he. You knew it before I told you, you vagabond. We have met before, have we not?"

"N-n-o-o."

"Don't lie to me," said Nansemond, as he placed his pistol to the frightened soldier's head.

"Oh, mercy! mercy! captain," cried the wretch, as he fell upon his knees.

"Eliza, your nails must be sharp. Just get some water, so that this fellow can wash the blood off his face. I wish to get a good look at him." This was done.

"I know you," remarked Nansemond. "You are Tim Arnell."

"Yes."

"You came on board the Powhatan, a privateer belonging to Captain Welland, while she was lying to at Havre de Grace, and volunteered as a patriot sailor, did you not?"

"Yes."

"How is it that I find you sporting a red coat?"

"I was captured, and forced into the British army."

"Were you forced to enter private dwellings and attack lone females?"

The villain hung his head.

"Now, look you, Tim Arnell, you must answer all my questions. When I am through with you, if I am satisfied you have answered correctly, and given me all the information you can, I will give you a chance for your life. If I am not—if I think you have withheld any thing, or deceived me in any manner, I will blow your brains out upon the spot."

"Oh, don't, don't! I'll tell all!" answered the trembling wretch.

"There never yet existed a human *brute* who was not a coward," said Nansemond. "Now tell me: Were you not sent as a spy on board the Nansemond?"

"You won't hang me?"

"Speak!" yelled the captain.

"No-o!"

Alberto placed the muzzle of the weapon he held against

the forehead of the villain. The cold iron made him shudder, and he answered, faintly :

"Yes, I was—I was. Mercy ! mercy !"

"Your comrade is stiff in death in the room above. If you attempt to deceive me again, I will not wait for you to correct your answer. Did you not give the information which enabled the English to surprise Captain Welland, take his life, and capture his vessel ?"

"I did."

"Where did you leave the Powhatan ?"

"I escaped from her while she was lying in Mill Creek."

"Where did you ever see Mrs. Welland, that you were able to recognize her here as the wife of Captain Welland ?"

"She was on board her husband's vessel when I joined it. I saw her often."

"How did you know that she resided in Baltimore, and how did you trace her here ?"

"I did not know she resided in Baltimore. I met her nigger in the street yesterday. That girl was with her mistress when she was on the Powhatan. I recognized her at once and followed her here. I watched and saw the face of the lady at one of the windows."

"Does any one else know that Mrs. Welland resides here ? Be careful !"

"Not a soul. I'll tell you how it is. As soon as I was satisfied that the lady lived here, the thought struck me that I might get a reward for the information. And so I went to the colonel and told him that I knew Mrs. Welland was in the city, and I thought I could find her. He told me if I would do so, and bring her to head-quarters, he would give me fifty pounds; and he gave me liberty from duty for a week. I didn't just like to attempt the job alone, and so I got Welsh Woods to come with me." The fellow really spoke correct English in his fright.

"Did any person see you enter here ?"

"I do not think they did. Still, it is possible, as we are so near the Charles street guard-house."

Nansemond for a moment seemed at a loss to know what to do. He led Mrs. Welland aside and conversed with her for a few moments in an undertone. Tim watched them like a hawk.

"It is not safe to venture it," the captain finally said; "you must go with me to the Dolly. Yourself and Lottie can go together, accompanied by Eliza. You will not be molested in daylight. I will follow at a short distance. This fellow must be bound until you are safe. I can not kill the coward in cold blood, even though he be a spy. It would be almost impossible to get him to my vessel, as he would give the alarm in the streets. Now, get ready at once."

"At this moment Sam returned and entered the apartment.

"Just in time, Sam," exclaimed Nansemond. "I've got another job for you."

"Golly, I's a useful nigga! Like de bake kettle, dat can fry, an' boil, an' cook generally, besides wash de dishes."

"Sam, you see that red-coat?"

"Yes, sah. I see he is a sneakin' rascal, shuah."

"He has been abusing your sweetheart, Eliza."

"Look a-heah, you red-coated musket-cleaner, if I cotch yo foolin' roun' my gal, I won't leabe a bit ob breff under dat jacket ob yourn. Do ye heah?"

"I did not interfere with her until she nearly killed me," said Tim. "Just look at my face where the black cat scratched me."

"Yah! yah! yah!" laughed the two darkies, in chorus. Then Sam drew himself up, as if for a moment he had forgotten his dignity, and said:

"Look a-heah: don't you call dat lubly female a black cat ag'in; cos if ye do, I'll gib ye one ob dem ole-fashioned broadsides what makes a pepper-box out ob jis' such trash as you. If ye don't want to get yer face scratched, jis' leabe female innocence alone."

"Sam, what success?" asked the captain.

"Fust rate. Gettin' acquainted all round. Thought I would not go too fast. Do better to-morrow."

"Have you a pistol, Sam?"

"Yes, sah! An' loaded up to de muzzle, enough to kick dis nigga into de middle ob Fort Henry."

"Well, remain here and watch that fellow until I return, unless you can think of some way to bring him a prisoner to the Dolly. But, don't run much risk, for the fellow would cry out as soon as in the street, even though he might make a hundred promises not to do so."

"I'll take care ob him," said the negro, as he seated himself a short distance from the soldier. Nansemond and his friends left the house with his charges, for the purpose of conveying them on board the Dolphin.

The negro sat for a long time silent. He grasped his weapon firmly. Occasionally he would scratch his head, as if endeavoring to hit upon some idea. At length he started up and exclaimed:

"I golly, I's gwan to do it, shuah."

"What are you going to do?" asked Tim.

"Take you prisoner, you sneakin' warmint what goes round seekin' whom he may dewcur."

"I am a prisoner now."

"Yes, but I's gwan to take you on board massa's bessel."

"Where is it?"

"Down in de harbor."

Tim smiled, which Sam saw, and added:

"Oh, you t'ink I won't. Tell you, sojer, I never 'tempt to do any t'ing dat I don't carry fru. Better make yer mind up to dat, you ugly, mizzable critter."

Sam stepped to the window and cut from the heavy curtains the silk cords by which they were looped. He laid down his pistol, and approached Tim, saying:

"F/le out yer han's, white trash."

The soldier made a movement as if to extend his hands, but with a sudden bound, he sprung upon the negro. The shock threw Sam to the floor. But, although not as powerful as his adversary, the negro was much more agile. They rolled and tumbled together upon the carpet, the soldier, in the mean time, setting up a most terrible howling for the purpose of alarming his friends. In the struggle it was evident that Tim was endeavoring to reach the pistol. He finally did so; but at the same instant, Sam seized the hand which held the weapon in both his own, and, dropping down, he caught his enemy by the throat with his teeth. With bulldog tenacity he clung to him, while Tim rolled and struggled, but all to no effect.

"I'm choking," muttered Tim, in a voice scarcely audible.

Sam loosened the hold for an instant, and exclaimed:

"Jus' drop dat pistol and gib up." And again he caught

the throat. Tim made but one effort more, and then the pistol fell from his hand.

"Will ye gib up?" asked Sam.

"Yes, yes."

The negro found no further trouble in binding his prisoner. This done, he proceeded to the kitchen, and, in a short time, returned with half a dozen bottle-corks, and a lighted candle. He also brought an old dress, a bonnet, and a shawl belonging to the negress Eliza. When he entered the room where Tim was bound, his mouth was stretched from ear to ear, exposing his masticators to good advantage.

"Oh golly! Yah! yah! I's great on strategy. See dis?"

"What are you going to do, Sam?"

"Don't ye see?" said Sam, as he held up the cork and the female dress. "Don't yer comprehenshum extend dat far, dat ye see I's a-gwan to honor ye onst as a delicate African female? Here is de dress, an' here am de materials for gibbin' ye de proper color—raal Congo, widout a drop o' white blood in yer skin."

"You don't mean to say that you're going to make a nigger wench out of a British soldier, do you?"

"Couldn't transmogrify ye altogedder, cos de white trash *would* stick out in yer little eyes and big feet; but, considerin' it's only *half* done, ye'd be more 'spectable dan ye ever was afore."

Sam then commenced to make lampblack of the cork, and with it blackened the face and hands of Tim until, from color, he might have passed for a thorough-bred African.

But at this moment he was startled by the sound of voices from below. Sam seized his pistol and said:

"Look a-heah, sojer, if ye breeve loud I'll send a bullet into yer head if I'm hung up de next minute for it. So, come wid me." Sam extinguished the light, and then, seizing his dress, he ordered the prisoner into a little closet, the door of which he closed, and then said:

"Look out you don't make no noise, ca'se a bullet will jis' stop yer mouf right t'rough de door."

Sam heard the soldiers in the room adjoining. Their curses were distinct, and their vows of vengeance loud, for they had found the body of the dead ruffian in the room

above, and were bearing it away. At length all was quiet and he ventured forth, leading the prisoner, still holding the pistol to his head.

"Now dress," said Sam.

The hands of the soldier were unbound, and he made the attempt to don the female apparel; but he made sad work of it.

"Don't tear dem clothes," said Sam. "If ye does, I'll hang ye here on de spot."

The warning was sufficient, and in a brief time Tim Arnell appeared clad in his female garb, his face and hands as black as night, although he did not present the appearance of an extraordinarily handsome lady "ob color."

Sam rolled upon the floor and laughed until the very tears dropped from his nose. Poor Tim could only smother his rage. He had already tested the strength of the negro, and he did not care to try it again. Besides, Sam kept a sharp look-out, and his pistol ready.

"Now I want to gib you a bit ob advice," said the negro. "I don't want to hurt you, but I am gwan to take you to de bessel or kill ye. Now you jus' do one t'ing. Keep yer mouf shut, and I ain't a-gwan to do ye no harm; but if ye attempt to gib de alarm—whist—off goes yer head."

"What will they do with me when they get me on board the Yankee ship? Hang me?"

"Wal, as ye don't know much, I shouldn't wonder, if you would go to work and jine de patriot cause, an' fight for de Stars and Stripes till de end ob de war, dat dey would let ye off, an' not stretch yer neck."

"Do you really think so, Sam?"

"Don't doubt it."

"I'll do it, by St. George."

"Sw'ar it by Yankee Doodle, Britisher, an' den I'll believe ye."

"Well, I swear it by the American Flag."

"Good! What de mischief's dat?"

While this conversation was going on, a very different scene was being enacted without. The searchers had brought the body of the ruffian soldier forth. Rawdon had arrived only a few days before from Charleston, and had assumed

command in Baltimore. He had determined to conquer the city or reduce it to ashes, and had issued an order that if another soldier was found dead, to burn the houses of any disloyal persons residing in the vicinity. Here was positive proof. A soldier had stated that he saw a man, a woman, and a wench leaving the house only a few moments before. The result was, the dwelling was soon in flames.

It was this that attracted the attention of Sam. The flames were winding up the staircase, bursting through the windows, and threatening immediate destruction.

"Quick! Jump! Don't speak a word, or you are a dead man!"

Sam and the soldier leaped from the back window to the yard below. It was an easy matter to gain a back street, and, pushing forward, they soon left the city in safety, on their way to the spot where the boat was usually concealed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ENCOUNTER.

AFTER our friends left the house they walked boldly down the street. Nansemond took the advance, the ladies following a short distance in the rear, the negress acting as their attendant. A number of the guard were passed, but they gave no heed to the party further than to pass occasional remarks upon the extraordinary beauty of Lettie.

Nansemond at length turned into Pratt street, and directly before him he saw a large crowd, among which were many soldiers. He knew not the reason of the gathering, and for the safety of the ladies would have turned back; but he heard a wail of sorrow, and he could not refrain from ascertaining the cause. He therefore advanced.

Near the center of a large circle, and seated upon the ground, was an aged woman. She was sobbing and moaning pitifully.

"How did it happen?" asked one of the bystanders

The old woman attempted to speak, but sobs choked her and she pointed to a young man standing near.

"Tell us—tell us," cried the crowd, who appeared to be somewhat excited.

"The ladies had better step in here until this crowd has dispersed," said a sweet voice. The words were addressed to Nansemond. He glanced at the speaker. It was a female, and she was seated at the window of a fine dwelling directly in front of which the crowd had gathered. A single glance convinced the captain that the speaker was a friend. He therefore motioned to the ladies, and they at once ascended the steps. The hall-door was opened, and they entered.

At this instant a small bit of paper was dropped from the window. Nansemond picked it up, and read:

"I know you. The ladies will be safe here. If you have occasion, do not hesitate to accept the hospitality of one who has much reason to feel gratitude toward you."

Nansemond cast his eyes toward the window, and gave a significant nod. Those around had not observed any of the party or their movements, so intent had they become upon learning the particulars of the old woman's sorrow.

"Tell us—tell us," they cried. The young man to whom the old woman had pointed began:

"Well, ye see, boys, this old lady here—her name is Nancy Jones. Everybody knows old Nancy—poor old lame Nancy—because she's so good to everybody. Why, she's always a-nursing the sick and the wounded, and all the British soldiers know her, for she don't confine her kind acts to any particular quarter. She's been in the hospitals here nearly all the time. When any of the red-coats was sick, she would go hungry herself just to get him something nice, just as quick as she would one of her own kin or the Yankees. And now o think they should serve her so."

"Shame! shame!" cried the bystanders.

"Yes, it is a shame," continued the young man; "because, not only the means of doing good, but her own living is gone now. Charley—that's the name of her boy—Charley Jones—is just as nice a fellow as ever walked. He took good care of his old mother, and, although he didn't like a bit the presence of the Britishers, yet he always said the poor soldiers

couldn't help it, and if some of them were brutes, they wasn't all so, and so long as they were sick or suffering, he wouldn't refuse to give his mother all the money he could spare, *not* for the *soldier*, but for the sick man. But now *he's* gone. This is the return *he* gets for his kindness."

"Shame! shame! shame!" was the excited response.

"I'll tell you just how it was, boys. You see the old woman had been out last night to attend to a sick British officer what had the small-pox, and couldn't get no one to go near him. So the good old woman heard of it, and went to attend on him, and I hope to God, if that officer don't do all he can to get Charley back, that she'll let the whole lot of 'em die before she ever lifts her finger for one of 'em again."

"Good! 'That's right!" yelled the now infuriated band.

"Stop a moment. That ain't the worst on't. It was about eleven o'clock last night when old mother Jones came home to get some sweet cream to touch the sick man's face with, to stop it's itching and burning. The old woman knows what to use, I tell you. Well, so Charley and I didn't like to see her go through the streets alone at that time of night, and he and myself went along with her. Well, when we were coming back, we were both seized by that infernal press-gang, and dragged toward the harbor. In the darkness I managed to slip the handcuffs which were placed upon me, and ran. There were some half-dozen other poor fellows with us, and so no one could be spared to pursue me for fear the rest of the victims might escape. When I found I was not followed, I turned for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, what they did with Charley and the rest. I saw them take the poor fellows in a boat and pull toward the prison-ship. And now, I tell you, boys, that Charley Jones, one of the best fellows that ever lived, and one to whom the Britishers owe heaps of gratitude, has been pressed on board one of King George's ships-of-war, where he will be murdered in a short time. I *know* his spirit, and he will *never* serve under the flag he hates, and which is the emblem of tyrants."

"Be careful what you say, young man. We don't want to hear treason talked here!" exclaimed a soldier, as he paced around the outside of the ring formed around the narrator.

"Don't you? Then clear out if you don't like my words,

for I'll say just what I please. Oh, you won't go. Then I'll tell you something that will tickle you, and you may report it to your lord commander. You are all a pack of villains and cut-throats, and if I had the power, I'd sweep you all into the bay. We feel the cæspot's heel just now, but, as there is a just God in heaven, you shall soon feel the clutch of our fingers upon your throats!"

"Don't you wish you had that power, young man?" sneered the soldier.

"Yes, and by the grace of God we will have it, minion!" thundered the unflinching youth, his eyes fairly scintillating with excitement and rage. "I am only one man, but I am equal to ten of my oppressors; as is every freeman around me. I am going to join the patriots this very day, and my motto shall be: 'Death to tyrants and their minions!'"

"Fred. Wilton, don't be rash," exclaimed an old man, as he came tottering forward. His appearance was somewhat singular. He was at least seventy years old, judging from the long white hair which fell over his shoulders. He was bent with age. He leaned upon a cane with one hand, while, in the other, he carried a basket containing a variety of articles, such as candies, apples, cigars, peanuts, etc.

"Don't be rash, young man," he continued. "If you had seen as much of the tender mercies of these men as I have, you would not threaten, but *act*."

"Yes, father Wilbert, *you* have seen much of them, and I wonder you can content yourself to be so much among them."

"The old beggar is dependent upon our charity for his bread," replied the soldier, still bent upon treating the patriots as unworthy of his anger.

"You are a liar, sir," replied the old man. "I am *not* a beggar. God help me, if I was compelled to live on *your* charities, you vagabond in arms! But I am not. I *sell* my goods, giving you a full equivalent for your money."

"I believe you are an old spy," continued the soldier.

"It is well known what I am," returned the old man. Rawdon and Stanley both know me. They know very well that if I was young and strong I would join the patriot army. They murdered my son on one of your piratical war vessels, and, as he had been my only support, why your commander

bestowed upon me the extraordinary privilege of selling my goods wherever I please. Here is the paper which gives me protection, and you *dare* not molest me." The old man held up a well-worn sheet, which was duly signed by the commandant of Baltimore.

"I see you are protected so far as selling your trash is concerned. But you are *not* protected in your impertinence to me, and if you are not more civil I'll break your old neck."

"You will not," yelled the person whom the old man had addressed as Fred. Wilton. "Touch a hair of his venerable head at your peril."

"Who will prevent me?" asked the soldier, fiercely.

"I will," replied Fred. "And not only myself, but all who are here with me, if I except the low-born stipendiaries of the crown."

"Yes—yes!" cried nearly a hundred voices, for the crowd gathered strength every moment.

"Boys," continued Fred., in an excited voice, "look upon that old woman. She has just been robbed of all she possesses in the world. *They* would let her starve now. Look at the old man. They have murdered his son, and now this brute threatens to kill him to satisfy a personal spite. Down with the red-coats!"

"Ay, down with the dogs!" yelled a hundred voices, as they sprung upon the soldiers.

"Stay! Hold, men!"

The crowd started back, and gazed upon the speaker. He was a man to command, and with a look to enforce obedience. He continued:

"Men, let us not injure the cause we wish to benefit by any rash act on our part. Let us rather be guided by reason. My sympathies are strongly with both the old lady and gentleman. I have suffered in the same manner. I have been deprived of a father, and I confess I feel a spirit of revenge. But street broils only injure where we should benefit. Will you be guided by me?"

"Yes—yes! We will!" was the almost unanimous cry. "You shall be our captain, and Fred. Wilton shall be our lieutenant. Lead us against these cut-throats."

"The city is full of patriots who only need a leader. You

can have an army at your call if you will but sound the rally." This was spoken by a man whose dress betokened him to be a minister of the gospel.

"If it is your wish to serve the patriot army you shall have an opportunity. Now, you hirelings, I have a message to send by you to your master."

"Better wait until these join us."

The speaker looked in the direction indicated, and saw a squad of about a dozen soldiers approaching under the command of a lieutenant.

"Stand firm, men, and do not move without my command," said the leader. "I will talk with this officer a few moments."

"Disperse this instant," cried the lieutenant, now coming up.

"For what purpose?"

"It is enough that I command you to do so!" cried the officer, fiercely.

"Your command! And who are *you*, that you should presume to command freemen?"

"Oh, ho! A treasonable band, eh? Men, ready!" At the command of the lieutenant a dozen muskets were brought to the shoulder and leveled at the crowd. But their leader stepped forward, and, placing a pistol at that officer's head, he said:

"If you give the command to fire I will scatter your brains in a thousand directions."

"Recover arms," commanded the lieutenant, as he saw that not only the leader was prepared for him, but that the entire party were evidently armed, and that it would be madness to oppose so large a number. He then asked:

"What are your intentions?"

"Simply to make you surrender your arms."

"Never!" yelled the lieutenant.

"I think you will," responded the leader. "Now, my men, ready." Again placing the pistol at the officer's head, he said:

"Now order your men to lay down their arms at once, or in two minutes not a man of them will be living. It is useless for you to attempt to resist, so you had better be wise."

"Ground arms, men," commanded the lieutenant, while he

fairly foamed with rage. This was done, and soon the weapons were in the hands of the patriots.

"And now," continued the leader, "I wish to send a message to your General. Tell him that in three days the following persons must be free to go where they please, or at least to their friends: Mr. and Mrs. Randall and their daughter, Charles Jones and Hubert Nansemond."

"Nansemond?"

"Ay, Hubert Nansemond, the father of the Cruiser of the Chesapeake!"

"And who are you?" demanded the astounded Briton.

"*Alberto Nansemond!*"

The officer and soldiers started back in amazement, while a cheer rung out from the patriots.

"Silence, men," cried Nansemond; "your shouts may attract attention, and bring down upon us a larger party of hirelings than we are able successfully to contend with. Now, sir, go to your General. Tell him to whom you have surrendered. Tell him to give up the parties I have named, or he shall meet Nansemond to his sorrow. No matter where he may be, I will find him. He may surround himself with his guard. Let him not trust them, for *I* may be one of the number. Let him not dare to rest, for in the stillness of the night *I* will visit him, nor locks, nor bolts, nor bars shall prevent me. Tell him this, and more. If I do not see my friends in a short time, or hear of their release, this bright blade will find his heart, and let its black blood forth. *Nansemond has sworn it!* And now, will you pledge your word as a soldier that if I permit you all to return, you will not give the alarm for half an hour?"

"You have my word," replied the lieutenant, evidently profoundly impressed with the patriot's noble bearing and defiant courage.

"I have a second thought. I'll not trust you. Enter that cellar, all of you. I shall leave a guard of a dozen men behind me. If you attempt to come forth while the guard remain, I shall order them to shoot you down without an instant's hesitation. You will not know how long my *men* will remain here, but, to avoid danger on your part, you had better remain in your prison at least one hour. You will

and but little difficulty in leaving it when the proper time comes.

The soldiers now entered the basement of the house into which the ladies had taken refuge, and were conveyed into a back room, and the door locked upon them. Nansemond then held a brief conference with Wilton.

"Father Wilbert," said Nansemond, addressing the old man, "would you serve the good cause?"

"I would, but I am so old I fear I could do but little."

"You will do all you can?"

"Most willingly. My life is at your service if it can do my country any good."

"Will you be guided by me?"

"In every thing which pertains to the common welfare, or to the protection of our outraged liberties."

"Then follow me."

The ladies now came from the house, and Nansemond, turning to the men, said:

"Six of you will remain here for a short time—say fifteen minutes—to guard the prisoner. That will give me sufficient time to secure the safety of the ladies. Those who can leave their homes, and wish to fight for the cause of liberty, will follow Lieutenant Wilton. I have already given him instructions where to lead you. He will select the six who are to remain behind, as he knows well whom to trust. He will instruct the guard where they will join his command when their duty is ended here. I trust you are all true men. Let no one venture to go with us who is not of us, for terrible will be the fate of traitors, if any such are found. I am Nansemond the Avenger now, and I wish no man to fail who has the heart of a freeman in his breast, for we must—we shall be, free of our tyrants."

His words were like sparks of fire to ignite the flames long smothered or suppressed in their bosoms, and each man felt himself ready even for a life-sacrifice upon the altar of liberty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DECK OF THE DOLLY.

LIEUTENANT WILTON placed the guard, and then, followed by most of the men, took his way toward the outskirts of the city. Nansemond, in company with Mrs. Welland, Lettie, Father Wilbert and the negress, took the lead until the city had been left behind. They then took different directions, Nansemond proceeding toward the spot where he had left the boat, while the others kept directly forward.

"What is this, Sam?" asked Nansemond, as he came to the spot where the boat was moored.

Sam was standing there grinning all over, while the fantastic figure of the soldier, decked in the wench's garb, was beside him.

"What kind of an animal is this, Sam?"

"Dis? Oh, it am a lubly critter dat I make lub to up in de city. Yah! yah! Ain't you jealous, Miss 'Liza?" The negress only shook her head and grinned. She had recognized her own dress, and suspected the truth.

"I hardly think Eliza would be jealous of such a thing as that!" returned Nansemond.

"Come, now, cap'n, mus'n't turn up yer nose at de booty ob dis critter, 'cos I's kind o' sot my 'fections on her, I has!" and again Sam rolled his eyes toward Eliza who only grinned back her apparent satisfaction.

"What are you going to do with her?"

"Take de t'ing on board de bessel."

"In heaven's name, for what!" queried Nansemond, in some surprise.

"Cos you told dis chile to do it, and I alers 'beys commands."

Nansemond now began to comprehend the state of affairs, and, this explained to the ladies, all joined in the laugh, and agreed that Sam was worthy of promotion. He evidently was equal to any emergency where sagacity and courage were of avail.

The boat was drawn from concealment, and the party embarked. It was not long before they reached the spot where the Dolphin was concealed, to find every thing safe and in readiness for service.

"How long has Captain Randall been gone?" asked Nansemond.

"You can see the white sails of the Pride just disappearing from view around yonder point." The captain gazed toward the spot indicated, and then said:

"She has a streamer flying at her mast-head."

"Yes, sir; old Noah, the painter, fixed it up."

"Is there an inscription upon it?"

"A what, sir?"

"What are the words painted upon it?"

"Well, I can't just read, sir. But when Captain Randall came aboard and saw it, he said, 'Good: tyrants beware.' So I reckon that's what it said, sir."

"Has her name been painted upon her?"

"Yes, sir, in three places. On her stern and on each side of her prow, just back of the figure-head. He is going to leave no doubts on the minds of the Royals, I guess."

"And what name is it?"

"THE PRIDE OF THE NANSEMOND."

"Well, Ransom, you are my chief gunner, and I can not dispense with your services in that line. But you can do double duty, can you not?"

"Never saw the time yet when I had too much to do, sir!"

"So I believe. You are, from this time, my lieutenant. You will command this vessel when I am absent."

"Oh, captain," exclaimed Ransom, the tears filling his eyes, "I ain't worthy to fill so high a position. Don't believe that, if you please, sir. I can train a gun, but I can't order ship."

"You have always proved yourself a true patriot, a faithful friend, a good sailor, and a generous, rather than a vindictive foe. You have sent terror and death a thousand times upon the enemy's decks, but you have ever been ready to spare the vanquished. You are equal to the position I confer upon you, and worthy of it. Men," exclaimed Nansemond, raising

his voice, "I have appointed Ransom as my lieutenant, and commander of my vessel during my absence. Do you confirm this with your votes?"

A three times three attested the hearty approval of the men.

"And Sam is my lieutenant when on shore." He then went on to relate the manner in which the negro had managed to bring the soldier spy along with him. Tim Arnell was pointed out, as he stood trembling in the background. A scream of laughter followed, as they saw the ridiculous figure of the wretch, and then the cry went up:

"Wash him! Wash him!"

No sooner said than enforced. A dozen buckets went into the water, and came up filled with the briny liquid. Tim stood half bewildered, and did not appear to comprehend the movements around him until the buckets were emptied, the water striking him full in the face, and with such force as to carry him down on the deck, where he lay sprawling and kicking, but too much frightened to utter any cries. Down again went the buckets, and again he was doused. This time it was over the body, and his face escaped somewhat, and thus being relieved from strangulation, he sprung to his feet and darted for the rigging. A half-dozen bounded after him, but fear gave energy to the man, and in a moment he was safe at the mast-head, a pitiful spectacle indeed. The water was dripping from his clothing, which had assumed a hermaphrodite appearance, mingling the somber hues of the negress' dress with the bright colors of the British uniform, while his face was spotted from its contact with the water, having only been half washed.

"The hose! the hose!" was the next cry.

The water hose was now brought forth, and attached to the pump, which was manned at once by twenty stout fellows. Poor Tim saw his fate, and, as one of the sailors seized the spout and mounted into the rigging to within some fifteen or twenty feet of the place where he was perched, his eyes fairly glowed with fright and anger. But it was of little purpose for him to threaten or plead, for the pump began to move, and the water went snapping through the pipe, striking him with much force directly in the face. At length Nansemond

ordered them to desist, and Tim reached the deck amid the cheers of the sailors.

Captain Nansemond, after having presented Mrs. Welland to his men, led the ladies into his own cabin. He had scarcely entered it when he heard the guns of the fort firing an alarm.

"Will it be prudent to remain here, now that the alarm is so general?" asked Mrs. Welland.

"It is just the place," answered Nansemond. "They can bring no large vessels over this flat, and they can not well reach us by land. I think Randall has been seen passing out into the bay, and the enemy will think it is myself. Besides, I have much to do in Baltimore yet."

"It will be dangerous for you to go to the city now. You would be recognized, and once in the hands of the British authorities, you would find no mercy!" exclaimed Mrs. Welland, somewhat excited and alarmed.

"Do not fear for me," returned the captain. "I have a mission to perform, and I feel that I shall be spared until it is finished. Father Wilbert, come with me to my private room. I have something especial to communicate to you." Nansemond and the old man entered the private cabin, but what passed was not known.

In a short time he came forth and inquired of Ransom for the captive captain who had been taken with the Spitfire. He found him in a small cabin in the forecastle, a neat apartment which had been fitted up for the second lieutenant of the Dolly, but had not been occupied for some months by that officer, he having been captured by the enemy some time previously. As Nansemond entered, he said:

"Good-morning, captain."

"Good-morning sir," was the response. The old air of insolence was gone. He was tamed.

"Are you comfortable?"

"As I could be in confinement."

"I shall endeavor to effect an exchange for yourself and your lieutenant as soon as possible."

"What officers do you propose to exchange us for?"

"One of my own lieutenants and my own father."

"Then I fear my case will not be immediately disposed of."

as my Government will refuse to exchange an officer of her navy for what she deems a Yankee privateer. Those on your vessels are looked upon as pirates and not as equals. To exchange would be to acknowledge your rights as equals and as belligerents—a right my Government probably never will recognize.”

“Then, sir, you will acquit me of blame in the matter. And it is because I am proscribed that I am often compelled to resort to that which is apparently dishonorable. If I am now compelled to ask a favor of you, and even insist upon it, in case of your refusal, you must attribute it to the circumstances by which I am surrounded, and not to any desire on my part to humiliate you.”

“What is the favor you would ask, sir?”

“Simply the loan of your uniform.”

“What!” shrieked the captive, springing to his feet.

“Your uniform.”

“Would Captain Nansemond take so base an advantage of a prisoner as to compel him to give up the dress he wears that an enemy may act a spy?”

Nansemond bit his lip, and then replied:

“Captain, I do not propose to act the spy. That is, it is not my intention to learn the weak points of the enemy’s works simply *for* the purpose of attacking them. But they have unjustly seized my father and other friends, and my purpose is to ascertain where they are confined, and in what manner I can best effect their release. This will naturally give me some knowledge of the enemy’s position, but I promise you that any knowledge gained by the aid of your dress shall not be used in any manner to their disadvantage, after my friends are rescued.”

“You can have my uniform, sir, only upon compulsion.”

“I regret it, sir.”

“Think you a court-martial would hold me blameless if I should part with it *willingly*?”

“I think I understand you.” Nansemond then set to work and soon removed the officer’s dress, as there was no resistance on his part. A fine suit of citizen’s clothing was given in its place.

Nansemond made a splendid appearance in his bright

gold-laced uniform, and, when he appeared on deck, and was recognized by his men, three hearty cheers were given, for the seamen knew that some daring enterprise was on foot. Lettie, comprehending at a glance what her father's intentions were, sprung into his arms.

"Oh, my dear father, are you going to that city again?" she exclaimed, betraying considerable emotion.

"Yes, child, it is important that I should be there in an hour. You will be perfectly safe here."

"Oh, father, I am not so selfish as you think me. I apprehend no danger as far as I am concerned. It is for you I fear."

"Have you not yet learned that I am more than equal to the sleepy Britons? You have nothing to fear, for I shall certainly return to you again."

"Who do you take with you?"

"No one but Sam."

Sam had been seated upon the deck conversing with Eliza and father Wilbert. The old orange-seller was very much improved in his looks, he having cast aside the old patched dress, and assumed one of more respectable appearance. When Sam heard these words, he sprung up, expressing his satisfaction in an unmistakable manner.

"You may get the boat ready, Sam, and place that bundle in it. We must be off in a moment." The negro did as directed, and soon all was ready.

At this moment Lieutenant Wilton was seen approaching with his men. This had not been explained to Nansemond's men, and supposing it to be an enemy, they sprung for their arms without awaiting the word of command. But the captain cried:

"Hold, boys. They are friends."

"Do they come to join us?" asked Ransom.

"Yes."

"Then give them a hearty welcome, boys," cried the newly-appointed lieutenant. This was done with a three times three as Wilton and his brave men came up the plank upon the deck of the little Dolly. Wilton was introduced to the sailors, who were informed that he had been elected commander of those whom he had brought with him, and that they were to have their choice of service, either on the water or land.

"Come, boys, wine for our new friends. Toast it merrily, but use your usual precaution to keep in good fighting trim. It is not impossible that we may have work to do here before long. Lieutenant Ransom, you had better keep a picket-line at least half a mile from the Dolly on all sides, in case an approach should be attempted on land. Should you be warned of the approach of any party more numerous than you can successfully contend with, raise your anchors and put to sea. In such an event I will join you at Oyster Bay inlet." Nansemond then stepped into the boat, after having taken an affectionate farewell of Lettie and his friends.

"Push off, Sam!" As he did so, another cheer was given, which made the old woods ring.

"Guard your prisoners closely," cried Nansemond, as the boat was rapidly leaving the Dolly.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Ransom.

At length the captain and the negro were seen to land and disappear among the trees.

"Where is Tim Arnell?" asked Ransom, as he searched about for his charge. That person was nowhere to be found. Every nook and corner, above and below, was ransacked, but the fellow was not to be found.

"He has escaped. He will return to the city and expose our captain. He saw him have on the British navy uniform. We must warn Nansemond," Mrs. Welland said, with apprehension in every lineament of her face.

"No time must be lost. Quick, a boat! Walter and Rupert, go you," commanded Ransom. "Fly to the city and see that the captain is warned. You can overhaul him yet. Away!"

In a moment the second boat was moving rapidly toward the place where Nansemond had landed.

bows, and before she can bring herself into position, we shall be beyond range of her guns. Doubtless she expected the pleasure of raking us fore and aft in a few moments."

Conrad sighted one of the long guns, and applied the match. The report rolled across the water, and was answered by echoes from the distant shore.

"That's a good shot, by Davy Jones! Did you see the water fly, captain?"

"Yes, that was a good shot. It must have struck just below the water line."

"Another like that will sink her."

"That must not be. I fear this one has already injured her too much."

"You *fear*! What do you mean, captain? Is it not your purpose to destroy all the British warsmen?"

"It certainly is, but not yet."

"May I ask your reason for delay?"

"Certainly. It is right that my brave boys should know our intentions, as they will share the danger and the glory."

The men were all upon deck, and within the sound of Randall's voice. He thus addressed them:

"Comrades, we are going forward to victory, but our work must not be rashly attempted. I am acting now upon our chief captain's orders; and you know he has always good reasons for his movements. When we returned to Baltimore, we both expected to find dear friends there. But we did not. Captain Nansemond had left behind him in supposed security an old father. He has been arrested by order of General Balfour, and it is thought he will be hung as a spy, if he is not found and rescued."

"Revenge! Revenge!" cried a hundred voices.

"This is not all. When I left Baltimore, my father, mother and sister were dwelling there in peace and happiness. But they too, have been seized, and it is the opinion of our captain, founded upon what we heard, that my sister is on board one of the vessels lying at the roads, a captive in the hands of the unscrupulous enemy, and only a timely arrival upon our part, or the interposition of heaven, can save her from her wretchedness."

"Death to tyrants!" was the shout which rung over the water

"The fate of my father and mother I am ignorant of. And my orders are these: not to even fire upon any vessel in the roads, if I can avoid so doing, until our captain comes up with the Dolly. But we are to take up a position outside the bar and prevent any vessel either from leaving or entering the bay. When the captain arrives, he will, I think, have all the information we require, and if my sister or our friends are *not* on board those vessels, we will send them to Davy Jones in a short time. If they *are* there, we must prepare to board and rescue them."

Three cheers for Captains Nansemond and Randall were given, which was answered from the British frigate by a shot which crashed through the rigging of the Pride, and fell into the water beyond without doing any material damage.

"Hello! They've a Long Tom aboard. Didn't suspect *that*."

"Give them an answer," said Randall, turning to Conrad.

"Shall I give her a teaser, sir?"

"Yes, send it home. Give the rascal a lesson."

Another shot from the war-frigate swept across the deck of the Pride, carrying away a portion of her bulwarks, but inflicting no further injury. The Pride's guns had already been shotted, and two of them belched forth their death messengers. One of these shots struck the poop, tearing away its sides, and nearly demolishing the wheel. The manner in which the frigate swung to showed her to have been temporarily disabled and unmanageable. The other shot struck just above the water mark, inflicting a frightful gash, which, in a rough sea, would have been dangerous, but as the waves were light, they did not reach the cavity.

"I don't think Rosie or my parents are on board that ship, and if not, I don't see why we shouldn't sink her."

"We can do it, captain," replied Conrad.

"Can we out-reach the frigate with our guns?"

"I think so. We will try it." The Pride had placed considerable distance between her and the British warsman. Another shot was fired by Conrad. It was sent high, and it tore through the rigging of the enemy. The compliment was returned, but the shot fell short.

"That's it—just what I wanted to know. Now, let me

take the helm." Randall stepped to the wheel. The *Pride* answered to the touch as readily as the loving maiden's heart does to the tones of fond endearment. She glided forward, while her enemy sent forth her angry howlings, but all to no purpose. It was the policy of Randall to keep beyond the range of the *Briton's* gun, and yet he wished to speak him. He had no idea that any of his friends were on the vessel; still, he wished to make *sure* of it. He therefore got directly astern the frigate, and, as he saw she could not be moved, he ran within a thousand yards. As he approached, he had his glass fixed upon the frigate's deck.

"My God, there is a female standing upon the deck," he suddenly exclaimed.

"Are you sure?" asked Conrad.

"Take the glass and look."

He did so and answered:

"You are right, captain."

"Can you distinguish her features?"

"No, not distinctly, but it appears to be a young lady."

"If it should be my sister, I must be careful the captain of the frigate does not discover it, for it would furnish him with too strong a weapon of defense. He would know that I would not even fire upon a vessel in which my sister was a prisoner."

"What is your plan, captain?"

"If it should be my sister she would recognize my voice at once, and by some word from her, the captain might learn the fact. I wish to avoid this."

"She would scarcely recognize your voice through the trumpet at this distance."

"And yet she might do so. Therefore I will instruct you what to say, and you shall converse with the captain. Here, take the trumpet and speak him."

"Frigate ahoy!" shouted Conrad. His voice floated over the still waters, clear as a clarion call.

"What do you want?" came a surly reply.

"What vessel is that?"

"His majesty's frigate-of-war *Thames*."

"Will you surrender?"

"To whom?"

"To the Yankee privateer *Pride of the Nansemond*, formerly the British sloop-of-war *Spitfire*."

"Is *Nansemond* on board?"

"It matters not. Will you surrender to the Yankee flag?"

"Upon what conditions?"

"Unconditional."

"Come alongside then."

"Beg pardon, sir. Prefer to remain astern."

"Then how the devil can I surrender?"

"I'll tell you how. Just embark your men in the life-boats, and land them all upon that point. I see you have a lady on board, and don't want to hurt her."

"I'll see you sunk first!"

"Oh, very well; if you prefer to be sunk, just the same to me."

"You would not sink a vessel containing a lady, would you?"

"Should be sorry to do so, but can't help it."

"But the lady is one of your own people."

"Indeed! Then what is she doing on your vessel?"

"She is a prisoner—captured in Baltimore."

"It is my sister," exclaimed Randall.

"Well, for her safety, send her on board our vessel."

"You must think I'm green."

"No. You expressed yourself to the effect that you did not wish the lady harmed, and I only intend to carry out your very laudable views. So, if you won't send her to us, just land her on that point, because I'm going to sink you in about five minutes." It was evident the captain of the frigate thought Randall would *not* fire on account of the young lady, for he replied:

"Sink and be cursed to you, you Yankee cut-throat!"

"What shall we do, Conrad?" asked Randall, in a tone of painful anxiety.

"Only one thing to be done. Make the fellow think we are in earnest, and I tell you he will be glad to escape to the land with his men. Let me give him two or three low in the stern. That will bring him to his senses."

"As you please," replied Randall, with considerable emotion.

There were two reports almost simultaneously, and, in a

moment, two others. The stern of the frigate was frightfully torn, although each shot had been sent with such accuracy that she was not struck below the water line, or in any part to sweep the deck, thus endangering the female.

"Will you surrender, or shall I give you another?" cried Conrad.

"Will you permit me to land all my men, my papers and personal effects?" asked the frigate's captain.

"Yes, if you will leave your prisoner, the lady, upon the vessel, so that we can get possession of her."

"Very well. But it will require two trips of the boats to remove the men."

"Oh, don't hurry. But I want you to deal fairly. Just place the lady where we can see her, and then go to work."

This was done, and in a few moments six boat-loads of human freight were moving toward a point of land not more than five hundred yards from the frigate. Soon a second load left the vessel, and her decks now appeared deserted, with the exception of the female, who was seated upon the bulwark. Randall had taken a little boat, and, in company with Conrad, was approaching the war-craft, when the female threw up her hands and cried:

"Stop! The vessel is on fire near the magazine!"

"Quick! Spring into the water! We will save you!"

With a single bound, the lady cleared the vessel. She had scarcely done so, when a most terrific explosion took place. Randall closed his eyes, and a fearful shudder shook his frame. But an exclamation from Conrad caused him to look up.

"Randall, it was not your sister."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. It was *not* your sister, but it *was mine!*"

"How came she there?"

"I know not. I left her safe in Baltimore. There she is. Thank God, she has risen to the surface, and is apparently unhurt. She is clinging to a fragment of wood. Quick!"

In a moment Conrad had lifted his sister from the water and she was safe.

Her story was quickly told. She had been seized in Baltimore, and conveyed on board the vessel, by command of the captain, whose gallantry she had spurned while in that city.

"Well, you are safe now. Let's give that villainous captain a parting salute, and then forward." A half-dozen shots were sent among the crowd which were standing upon the shore, causing a scattering. The *Pride of the Nansemond* then started on her way, and, without any adventure of note, entered the shelter of the island outside the Chesapeake Bay entrance.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

AFTER *Nansemond* and the negro had concealed their boat, they took their course directly for the city. It was not long before they reached the outskirts.

"Now, Sam," said the captain, "you may continue your search. If you have any thing of importance to communicate, you can bring it to me here."

They had reached the dwelling in front of which the trouble with the soldiers had taken place that morning, and the captain was anxious to learn who the parties were who had so kindly given protection to the ladies. He therefore ascended the steps, while the negro, after having thrown the bundle which contained *Nansemond's* private dress into the basement, continued on. The door was opened by a negress.

"Are the ladies at home, aunty?" asked the captain.

"Dunno. 'Spec' I better ax 'em."

"Do so, aunty."

"Who shall I say wants to see 'em?"

"Merely say a gentleman, who is a friend of the family, desires a moment of conversation. He comes to thank them for a great service they rendered him this morning."

"Will it please you to enter, sir?" The voice was that of a lady, especially pleasing in its tones. It was the same which *Nansemond* heard that morning. It came from the parlor, the door of which into the hall was slightly ajar. As the captain entered, the old negress rolled up her eyes, and said:

"Dat massa 'Berto, *shu!* See'd him dis mornin'. Lord, de ole uns 'ud like to hug him!"

"Will Captain Alberto Nansemond be seated?" said the lady, with a sweet smile.

"Certainly, lady; but—"

"The room is so dark you can not distinguish a chair. Ruth, open the blinds a trifle, until our visitor is more accustomed to that which probably appears like total darkness to him, having just come in from the bright light." This was done.

"Pardon me, captain, but to avoid especial observation I keep my house closed. Pray be seated—here, by my side." There was too much frankness of manner, combined with those natural qualities which adorn the true lady, and which ever are unmistakable, for the captain to misconstrue the friendly greeting of his hostess. He therefore took his seat, and asked:

"May I be permitted to ask to whom I owe the favor of this morning?"

"Certainly. My name is Fanny Stanley."

"I do not recollect to have heard the name."

"Indeed! Have you not heard the name of Colonel Stanley?"

"Certainly I have. And have I the honor of addressing the lady of so generous and high-toned a gentleman—although an enemy—as Colonel Stanley?"

"Sir, you address the wife of Captain Stanley, of the patriot army, and *not* Colonel Stanley, of the British army."

"Still I do not recollect having met you before, unless the vague image left upon the mind by some pleasant dream can be called a recollection."

"I will rehearse to you the past. In one of the pleasant villages of Switzerland, long years ago, resided two families. No homes were ever happier. The names of these two families were, respectively, Nansemond and Lorette. Each family was blessed with an only child. That of the former was called Alberto—that of the latter, Fanny."

"And you are that child?" cried Alberto, as he extended his hand.

"I am that child!" she answered, while a deep flush suffused her cheek.

"Well, go on. Tell me more!" Nansemond exclaimed, with much eagerness of manner.

"You know that when your mother died, your father Hubert Nansemond, almost broken-hearted at his loss, and wishing to escape those scenes which at every turn reminded him of his bereavement, determined to emigrate to the New World. You recollect our parting?"

"Very well; it almost seems like yesterday. And I recollect how you wept, and how my young heart was grieved."

"Well, you had been absent but a year when my own mother died. This was a heavy blow to my father. At length he determined to follow his friend Hubert. He had heard that Nansemond had settled in Virginia. We embarked on board a vessel bound for Baltimore. The journey was a delightful one, not even the shadow of a storm to ruffle the waters, until we had reached within a few miles of the Virginia shore. Then, as sudden as it was terrific, a tempest arose. For hours we were dashed about with the wild waves. At length we struck a rock. The vessel shrieked and groaned as if in mortal agony, and then went in pieces.

"I either fainted with fright or became insensible from strangulation, I can not tell which. When I recovered my consciousness, I found myself in a poor squatter's hut. He had saved me."

"Oh, bless him! bless him!" exclaimed Nansemond, evincing the most intense excitement. Mrs. Stanley gazed earnestly upon him. The captain observed the look, which seemed to recall him to consciousness. The blood mounted to his temples, as he exclaimed:

"Pardon me, dear lady, if for a moment I forgot myself, and gave vent to my feelings as I would have done in youth!"

"There is no occasion for you to ask pardon, captain. My look was not one of reproach, but of surprise and gratification. I would measure other hearts by my own. I do not think the sentiments and affections of our youth can ever be obliterated, and I am glad to see you express the emotions which I myself also feel. It almost appears to me that I

a child again while seated by your side. I think the love dwelling in the hearts of children may still be cherished by the matured mind, without conflicting with those other duties which devolve upon us."

"You utter my sentiments. May I call you Fanny?"

"I should feel hurt were you to address me by any other title."

"Where is your husband, Fanny?"

"He was in Washington's army, upon the Delaware, when last I received information from him. But six long months have passed by since that time, and I feel the deepest solicitude in his behalf."

"It would be difficult for information to be sent you from that quarter, as the British lines can not well be passed. But you have not told me of yourself since you were rescued by the fisherman."

"I will do so. I was taken by a wealthy Virginia lady, and kindly cared for. My father was never found. He perished in the waters. Well, as a child, I soon forgot my grief, and became happy in my new home. Every one was kind to me, and yet, at times, my mind would wander back to the old hills of my native land, and those delightful early recollections, and I almost wished myself a child again, if childhood could bring again such joys."

"Ah, if we could but be children again!" exclaimed Nansemond. "Even in the roar of battle the beautiful picture of my boyhood's home flashes before me, and my very soul has cried out for the peace and innocence of those dear hours when, hand in hand, we wandered over the sweet valleys and noble hills of our own fair Switzerland."

"Shall I go on?"

"Yes, if you please. I almost forget my sorrows and my present duty in this most unexpected relation."

"The remainder of the story may be more painful than that already related."

"Still go on, for I would hear it all."

"Alberto, my protectors died, and I was left again homeless. I received a formal offer to become the wife of Richard Stanley, and I accepted it."

"Fanny, your tone startles me. You are not happy."

"I have not been as happy as I could wish since that time."

"You do not love your husband."

"I married without love, but the gentle manner of my husband has won my heart so far that the duties of a wife are no longer irksome, but pleasant. There has ever been a peaceful charm thrown around my home, and I became content."

"And you are *not* so now."

"There is a tempest in my heart which never has ceased to fill my soul with unrest. I am outwardly happy, and seemingly content, for why should I not be? Yet in my secret soul I am most miserable—most unhappy. I can tell *you* this, Alberto, because my resolution and my strength to do the right will never fail me. Alberto—*brother*, I am a wife, and, even were it possible for me to treat with levity the obligations of that sacred name, *you* would guide me aright. Would you not?"

"Fanny, an honorable woman, even though she were a stranger to me, if she sought my protection, would receive it as readily as I would give it to my own pure-souled daughter."

"Your daughter, Alberto?"

"Yes; it was my own daughter you protected this morning."

"That sweet young creature? And I never dreamed she was *your* child! And the lady with her?"

"Is *not* my wife. Indeed, I never saw her until this morning. She is the widow of the late Captain Welland, a former acquaintance of mine. I have discovered her here by chance, as I have discovered you."

"Well, Alberto, I have heard of your deeds for the past three years with something of a feeling of pride. But I would fain learn your history previous to that time."

"It is given in a few words. Nothing of note transpired in my life after arriving in this country, until my eighteenth birthday. On that day I was married to a lady by the name of Redland. She bore me two children—a bright boy and a girl. The boy was two years the oldest. While Lettie was yet an infant, her mother died. To this calamity was added

another. My boy disappeared. We were residing at that time upon the river which now bears my name. It was the opinion of some that the boy was drowned, and of others that he had been stolen by the Indians. Whatever may have been the facts of the case, he was never found. I lived on the river plantation until a short time before the war broke out, when I removed, with my father and child, to this city.

"I expressed my patriotic and revolutionary sentiments rather too freely, was thrown into prison, but was enabled to escape through the kindness of some unknown friend. Shortly after, one who had confidence in me gave me the Dolphin, which, in connection with the name of Nansemond, has become so well known in the bay."

"You never learned to whom you were indebted for your escape?"

"Never, though I made most careful inquiry."

"You would like to know?"

"I would, indeed."

"Then listen. It was given out when Gordon entered the city that all those who extended the slightest sympathy to the "rebels" would be deemed equally guilty with them of treason. *You* were soon selected as a victim. I know what your feelings must have been. Stung by constant persecution, you bearded the lion in his den, and the result was a prison for you. It was by an accident that I learned this. It was the first time I had received the slightest information with regard to your whereabouts. I determined you should be released. I was alone, my husband having already become engaged with the patriots. I first ascertained where you were. This done, I used that potent golden key which is able to open even prison-locks. The guard was bribed, and you were free. The messenger whom I employed to inform you of my presence in the city failed to see you. I had made frequent efforts to communicate with you, but to no purpose. This morning I saw you for the first time since our childhood days, but I recognized you in an instant. I could not then make myself known, as there were present with me parties whose sympathies are so strongly with King George that I dare not trust them. I felt that you would visit me again."

"Is it known in the city that your husband is in the patriot army?"

"It is not. And hence I am not molested, but am enabled to render valuable aid frequently, and without awakening suspicion. But why is it that you are dressed in the uniform of the British navy, Alberto?"

Nansemond went on to state the facts with which the reader is already familiar. And then he added:

"With the assistance of this uniform I shall be enabled to pass around the city unquestioned. My purpose is to ascertain where my father and other friends are confined. This done, I shall lay plans for their rescue."

"It is a dangerous undertaking, Alberto. There are those in the city who will recognize you even in that disguise. Those whom you met here this morning for instance."

"I must run the venture. My life is one constant scene of dangerous adventures and narrow escapes. I feel that I shall be successful in this one."

"Alberto, there is even now upon the opposite side of the street a soldier who is gazing in an earnest manner in upon us." Nansemond turned and gazed through the window in the direction indicated. He then said, calmly:

"That soldier recognizes me. It is Tim Arnell, as sure as light. He must have escaped from my vessel, and have dogged my steps hither. The rascal will give me trouble. See, he has started off at a rapid rate. Soldiers will be upon us soon. Deny all knowledge of me, but I will be near to protect you, if it is necessary." Saying which, he disappeared.

The soldier upon the opposite side of the street, who had recognized Nansemond, was, indeed, no other than Tim Arnell. Of course the naval uniform would no longer serve as a disguise.

CHAPTER X.

SAM IN TROUBLE.

THE negro, Sam, after leaving the captain, walked directly to the head-quarters of the General commanding, which was in a large stone building upon what is now known as "Monumental Square." Near the quarters were a number of other buildings less imposing in appearance, which were also occupied by British officers of less rank. Their gay uniforms presented a fine appearance as they lounged upon the richly-cushioned furniture in front of their respective quarters. As such luxuries are never furnished in armies, it was not difficult to conceive in what manner such articles were procured. Some of the officers were smoking, others drinking and speculating upon the ultimate result of the rebellion, while others contented themselves with watching each passer-by, and making remarks with regard to their personal appearance or peculiarities. Occasionally a lady would be compelled to undergo the most impudently-scrutinizing gaze, and overhear some rude remark made at her expense. Few females, however, excepting on unavoidable occasions, ever frequented that locality, so detested were the British.

Sam paused before one of these buildings, and stood, hat in hand, grinning, as if the scene was entirely novel to him, and provocative of laughter.

"What do you want, Cuffee?" asked one of the officers.

The negro wriggled about for a short time, gaped, appeared trying to speak, but failed, and then tittered, as if something very funny had taken place.

"The fellow is a fool," exclaimed an officer. "Speak out, sir. What do you want? Don't stand grinning there!"

"Wants to be sarvant, massa sojer." Sam made an awkward attempt at a bow, which called forth a peal of laughter from those around.

"You want to be a servant, do you?"

"Yes, sah."

"What can you do?"

"Most ebery t'ing. Brush de boots, coam de ha'r, an' shabe ye."

"Shave me!" echoed the officer, with a hoarse laugh. "Why, you would cut my throat the first attempt."

"T'ink not, massa sojer. Nebber cut but one man's froat!"

"Well, that is pleasant. You propose to be my barber, and then tell me you never cut but one man's throat! How did that happen, dark?"

"Why, ye see, dis chile am awful skeered at guns. Just as de razor was on de t'roat, a big cannot fire off close by, an' made me jump like Moses in de rushes. So he got cut, but it didn't hurt him much."

"Who owns you?"

"Dunno. Did belong to massa Randall. I 'spec he sell me to ole missus; but dunno. I lib wid her."

"Have you got a pass?"

"What's dem?"

"A paper giving you the privilege of going around the city alone."

"Dunno. Got somethin'. Here's a paper." Sam handed over the bit of paper he had received while at the nouse of Mrs. Welland. The officer glanced at it, and then said:

"It's all right. But you had better go home."

"Can't do it, massa, no how, at dis pertickler time."

"Why not?"

"'Cos massa Randall has gone off, an' his house is full ob sojers. And missus' house am burned up."

"Oh, I see; you belong to that old rebel, Randall. Where is your master?"

"Dunno. He's dun gone, shuah, widout sayin' good-by to dis nigger."

"Would you like to know where he has gone to?"

"Ain't berry 'ticular, no how."

"Did you ever hear your master say any thing about the army here in Baltimore?"

"'Speck he say he wish ye was all gwan to de oder side ob Jordan wid de Debil hissself to ferry you ober."

"Do you like the soldiers, you son of Ham?"

"Oh, golly, yes! Dey gib me lots ob money when I singa

to 'em and dances de corn-shuck hornpipe. An' I can dance, I tell ye!"

"He's all right, I think," said the officer, addressing one of his fellows. "He don't know enough to be a spy. I'll tell you where your master is, darkey. He is—by Jove, Fred., look at that girl. *Aint* she a beauty?"

Only a short distance from the speaker was seen a young girl approaching. She was indeed beautiful, while her timid manner gave her an additional charm. Her dress bespoke a person in humble life. She could not have been more than fifteen years of age. As she approached the officers a crimson blush overspread her face, and her eyes rested upon the ground. She paused before them.

"Well, my little beauty, what can we do for you?" asked the officer.

"If you please, sir, I would like to see the General!"

"Indeed! And what is your business with the General?"

"If you please, sir, I want to get a pass."

"For what purpose, my dear?"

"I want to go to Philadelphia, sir. I am all alone in this city now, and I want to go where I have friends, if you please, sir."

"Does your father and mother live in Philadelphia?"

"Alas, sir, I have neither father or mother. I have **only** two friends in the world. One of them is good old father Wilbert, and the other is his son."

"Ay, I see. The son is a lover of yours, is he not?"

"Yes, if you please, sir."

"Why, old father Wilbert is in this city. I saw him only yesterday. Is not his son here, too?"

"No, sir. His son was taken nearly a year ago by the soldiers, and carried on board a British ship to serve as a sailor. Well, sir, they treated him so badly that he was about to die. They put him out of the ship on the land, and he was found by a man they call Captain Nansemond."

"What, the celebrated pirate? Well, go on, girl."

"Well, the captain treated him so kindly that he got well. Poor old father Wilbert almost broke his heart at the loss of his son. And he had no way to earn his bread, sir, for you know he is very old. I tried to help him, but I could

not earn much, and so the old man went to selling apples. Oh, sir, only this morning I heard where Charles Wilbert is. He is on a ship, but will be in Philadelphia some time this summer, and he wants me and his old father to come out there."

"Well, by Jove, you do not lack for assurance to ask such a favor for a pack of rebels, and one of them a pirate."

"Sir, I have never done any harm to anybody, and I know poor old father has not. We will not trouble you any at all if you will let us go."

"Where is father Wilbert?"

"I do not know, sir. I have been in search of him all day to tell him that his son is alive and well."

"Well, girl, I will tell you what I can do. If you will come here and give a rousing kiss, I will get an interview for you with the General."

"If you please, sir, I'd rather not kiss you, if it's all the same."

"By Jove, your modesty pleases me. Well, you need not kiss me, but let me kiss you. Come, now, don't be backward. Come directly to me, or I shall send you away without seeing the General."

Mary Nelson, for such was the name of the young girl, advanced with a timid step and a downcast look, toward the officer. The brute seized her in his arms, and commenced kissing her in the most frantic manner, while a half-suppressed scream escaped her.

"Yours must be a brutish nature," exclaimed a voice, and at the same time the officer was hurled with considerable force from the spot.

"Good! Bravo—bravo!" cried a dozen voices. "Father Wilbert, the champion of female innocence." A general laugh followed these words.

With a cry, Mary bounded into the arms of the old man, exclaiming, as she did so:

"Oh, father Wilbert, you will protect me."

"Certainly, my child. The old man is feeble, but he has strength enough left to protect you against the attack of such ruffians. Why are you here, child?"

"I came to solicit a pass for myself and you to go to Philadelphia."

"For what purpose, child?"

"Oh, father, I have joyful news for you. Your son is alive and well."

"My son! Surely you are deceived!"

"Yes, your son Charles, who you thought had died on board one of the British vessels. But you do not appear to be as rejoiced as I supposed you would."

"Rejoiced? I can not comprehend it—my cup is too full. Ah, if it is true, then indeed it will be a happy meeting when the old man can fold his noble boy to his heart. Where is he?"

"On board a vessel commanded by Captain Alberto Nansemond."

"Indeed!" said the old man, starting. "What is his name?"

"What is his name? What is the name of your own son? I do not understand you."

"Of course I mean, does he go by his correct name—Charles?"

"Yes, he is called as he always was, Charles Wilbert."

"Yes, I remember him—as an affectionate, dutiful son. Come hither, child." And the old man said, as he led her a little apart:

"It is getting almost dark. I will endeavor to get the passes which we require. In the mean time, do you go to No. 28 Pratt street. Ask for Mrs. Stanley, and claim her protection for a few days. The old man will come for you." The young girl started rapidly for the place designated.

Scarcely had she taken her leave, when the attention of father Wilbert was attracted by loud words which proceeded from near the head-quarters of the General. Upon nearing the spot, he found quite a crowd of officers and soldiers, and to his surprise and sorrow, he saw the soldier Tim Arnell in dispute with the negro Sam.

"I tell you," said Arnell, "that's the nigger. It was him that made me black my face and hands, and dress up like a nigger wench. He took me to a vessel which is hid down in the woods, and owned by that pirate, Nansemond. That villain stood by and saw his crew wash me. And he is here himself, dressed in the navy uniform of a British navy captain. I have just escaped from the pirate vessel. I followed him

and this nigger here until they separated. Then I dogged Nansmond's steps and saw him enter, as I before warned you."

"But no trace of him was found there, and the city is thoroughly patrolled."

"Well, then he left before they arrived, that's all. He *was* there, as sure as I am alive and in my senses."

"Well, you black whelp, what do you say to the charges made against you by this man?" asked one of the officers.

"I ses dat sojer man lies faster dan dis nigger can run. Maybe he's drunk or crazy," and Sam looked the soldier unflinchingly in the face.

"You call me a liar again and I'll break your black skull," yelled Tim, who now made no effort to conceal his rage. "Colonel, these marks on my throat is where that rascal bit me. Just give me leave to get at him."

"Yes, massa cunnel, let him get at me. We'll settle dis 'ere business ourselbes. Dat feller wants to take away my good character, an' so he tells dese lies on me. Didn't de sojers all hear me singin' here dis mornin'? And dat's jus' de time dat lyin' sojer say I was on de bessel peltin' him."

It was evident that all the officers thought Tim was mistaken, more especially as several present vouched that Sam *had* been there, singing his songs, some time during the day. It was therefore determined, for a bit of a lark, to let the two belligerents settle the matter themselves.

"I think you had better arrange the matter between yourselves," said one of the officers.

"You give me leave?" asked Tim, eagerly, while a gleam of savage satisfaction lit up his face.

"Yes, you and the darkey reconcile your own differences."

In an instant he dashed upon the negro. Sam had been standing entirely on the defensive, and as his opponent approached, he dealt him so powerful a blow, that the soldier reeled and fell to the ground. The shout of laughter which followed this, perfectly infuriated Tim. He bounded to his feet and this time he succeeded in clinching with the negro. There was desperate struggling for a few moments, during which Tim inflicted several heavy blows on the pate of his black antagonist, which sounded very much like striking upon

a hollow log, but produced no visible effect, as Sam did not so much as utter a grunt. A series of kicks upon the shins produced a different result.

"Oh, dat's yer game, is it?" yelled Sam. "Den take dis," and the negro fastened his ivories upon the arm of Tim, which caused him to yell most lustily. But no one seemed disposed to interfere. At length Tim made a desperate effort, and both rolled together into the gutter.

"What is that?" cried an officer, as he picked up a pistol which had fallen from Sam's pocket. "It is a weapon belonging to the British service."

"Yes, and by heavens, it bears the number of Levi Martin, the guard who was murdered last night at the corner of Charles and Baltimore streets. Seize that negro!"

CHAPTER XI.

MYSTERY UPON MYSTERY.

SAM was immediately seized and bound. He gazed around as if to seek some mode of escape, when his eyes met those of father Wilbert. This was some comfort, at all events, as Nansemond would be informed of his situation. But one thing was quite certain. Whatever action was taken in his case would take place at once. The soldier's story was now believed, and that Sam was one of Nansemond's spies there was little doubt. Nansemond had been seen that very morning, and had actually captured a body of soldiers in open day, and each eye instinctively searched the face of his neighbor to satisfy any doubts which might arise with regard to their own identity. Every person of powerful frame, and those clad in naval uniform, were objects of especial attention. But the bold privateer was nowhere to be seen.

It was now quite dark, and Sam was conveyed into the old mansion for the purpose of examination. A large crowd followed, among whom was the old man Wilbert. He did not appear to manifest any especial interest in the case, but no

doubt he felt it, as he was well aware that the negro *was* the servant of his newly-found friend Nansemond, and probably was performing some mission upon which that personage had sent him. He did not know what revelations the black might be frightened into making. The old man therefore quietly took his seat in a retired place.

"Now, you black dog," exclaimed the commander, "I want you to answer me every question I ask you truly. If I catch you in one lie, I'll hang you on the spot."

"Yes, sah. I'll tell de trufe."

"How came that pistol in your possession?"

"Neber was in my 'session, sah. Dat's de fac'!"

"You lying rascal, it fell from your pocket while you were scuffling with Arnell."

"No, you are mistaken, sah. It fell from de pocket ob dat sojer Tim. I see'd him tryin' to get it out to shoot me, two, three times, and I watched and knocked it out his pocket." This was spoken with so much apparent candor that it made its impression upon the officers, and they turned their eyes upon the soldier. Certain it was, that had Arnell really been the murderer of the soldier, either from revenge or any other cause, he would have kept the pistol concealed, as the finding it upon his person would have been sure conviction. Besides, Sam did not look like a person who would have courage to attempt such a deed.

"Has there ever been any ill-feeling existing between Arnell and Martin, the murdered man?" asked the commander.

One of the officers took a large book from the table, and opened it, as if in search of something of which he had only an indistinct recollection. At length he said:

"I find here the proceedings of a court-martial recorded in the case of violently assaulting, with intent to kill, one Levi Martin, private in his majesty's Twenty-eighth regiment of the line, by one Sergeant Timothy Arnell of the same regiment. The sentence of the court was that Arnell receive fifty lashes, be placed on extra fatigue duty for thirty days, and be reduced to the ranks."

There was an instant change of sentiment with regard to the guilt of the negro. The proof against Arnell was sufficient to convince every one of his complicity in the murder of the

guard. He had on one occasion endeavored to take the life of Martin, and had suffered for it. There was a deadly feud between them, and, as he had once shown a disposition to commit murder, why should he not take advantage of the darkness to inflict the fatal blow, thinking to screen himself under the prevailing opinion that the deed had been done by rebels.

"There is another mysterious circumstance connected with this. Lieutenant Fairchild and Captain Alden, you will proceed at once to the dead-house, where are lying the bodies of Levi Martin and that of Welsh Woods. The latter was found murdered in a house on Charles street, this morning. You will make an examination of both bodies, and mark if there is any similarity in the wounds by which their death was caused."

The two officers went forth in obedience to the order of the General, and no further proceedings were had until their return. Ere long they reëntered the room, and reported that the wounds bore the appearance of having been inflicted by some heavy instrument, the blow from which had broken the skull, and that the marks were of precisely the same nature, with the exception that Martin evidently had been struck from behind, as the wound was upon the back part of the head, while Woods had received the blow directly across the forehead.

"Is it your opinion that the blows were inflicted with a heavy pistol, like the one I am holding up before you?" asked the General.

"It is, so far as we can judge."

"And that each blow was inflicted with the same weapon?"

"The same, or one similar."

"The building in which the murder took place was burned to the ground. This occurred between nine and ten this morning. The body was taken from it a few moments before. It was warm and bleeding, showing the deed to have been committed only a few minutes previous. Sergeant Chester you spoke of seeing a party leave the house just before the murder was discovered. Of whom did this party consist?"

"General, I first saw a large man come from the basement and walk down the street. In a short time he was followed

by two persons who appeared to be mother and daughter. They were followed by a black servant."

"Was the servant the boy you see yonder?"

"No, General, it was a female servant."

"Why were you watching the house?"

"Because Woods told me he was going there with Tim Arnell, and that he had got a good thing."

"You saw no one else come from the house?"

"No one else came from the house at all. I remained watching until after the building was burned to the ground."

"Do you know of any ill-feeling between Arnell and Woods?"

"I believe they were on terms of friendship."

"I have observed this negro before to-day, but I do not distinctly recollect the hour. I think he was singing for the amusement of the officers. Can any person present give me the exact time, or near it?"

"If it please you, General, to take the word of poor old father Wilbert, I can give you the hour when I saw the negro here."

"Well."

"It was about nine o'clock this morning, and I think there are other gentlemen here who can confirm my words."

A dozen others testified to having seen Sam at that hour. This was true, as the negro had returned to the house a few moments after Woods had been stricken down by Nansemond.

"You can go, sir," said the General, addressing Sam.

"General, General," cried Tim, "I beg you will detain that fellow until you have heard me through."

Sam was detained, and Tim went on to relate all that had occurred, with which the reader is familiar.

That Nansemond was in the city, or some person representing himself to be such, was certain. The lieutenant who had surrendered to him that morning confirmed this. The story of Tim was possibly true. His wet and soiled uniform and the particles of black still left upon his face and hands confirmed, in part, his assertions.

"Well," exclaimed the General, "it is a queer case, anyway. I shall lock the negro up to-night. If you do know any thing about this pirate, Sam, you had better make up your

mind to reveal it in the morning. If you will assist me in his capture, I will not only pardon you, but reward you well. Take him to the black-hole."

Sam was led away in silence, to ruminate over his fortunes in a cellar as dark as a pocket, and about as disgusting as a hog-pen. To such quarters the "humane and honorable foe" confined those patriots who were not meek enough to accept British clemency without a word or two of scorn and imprecation. Sam being "nothing but a nigger," of course could not be assigned to a decent prison.

"And, Arnell, you shall guide a party of five hundred men to the spot where you say this pirate vessel is concealed. Major Noah, you will take command and move forward at once."

The officer addressed left the room.

"Now," continued the General, "I will turn my attention to this Nansemond. I have a way in which I can humble his proud spirit. His father is in my power, and I will proclaim to-morrow that, if the pirate does not give himself up, I will hang the old man. Why, the pirate had the assurance to send me a list of names this morning, of several rebels I hold in durance vile, and to tell me if I did not set them free he would find me out and be revenged, even if he had to strike me down in the public street, or surrounded by my soldiers. Faith, why don't he come?"

"He *has* come! Die, tyrant and dog that you are!" The voice came from the back part of the room, near the open door. It was a voice deep and terrible. At the same instant the flash of a pistol was seen, its echo rung through the apartment, and the General fell back in his chair, while a deathly pallor overspread his face. Every person in the room had sprung to their feet, and the utmost confusion prevailed. No one cared about being the first to approach the door, as it was uncertain what reception he might receive. In a moment father Wilbert came tottering forward, and exclaimed:

"You must thank heaven, all of you, that you have not been instantly blown into another world."

"What do you mean?" cried the General.

"When I heard that voice, I immediately recognized it to be that of Nansemond. I knew he wouldn't hurt the old

man, and so I followed him to the door. There I found a keg of powder, with a burning fuse attached to it. A moment more and it would have been too late. I tore the fuse away, and you are safe."

A shudder ran through the crowd, and an examination proved what the old man had said to be correct.

"Are you sure it was Nansemond?" asked the General.

"I could not mistake his voice. I heard and saw him this morning in Pratt street, where he made the soldiers surrender."

"Would you know him again if you were to see him?"

"Instantly."

"But if he should be disguised?"

"I should know him in any disguise."

"Old man, for the service you have rendered us to-night you shall have a rich reward. If you will remain here, keep strict watch, and point out the villain if he should venture around again, I will reward you doubly."

"I will," replied Wilbert, earnestly.

"But I thought you favored the rebels?" said the General, as if suddenly recollecting himself.

"I did; but I do not favor *pirates*. I will tell you why I, perhaps, was led to favor the revolution. Your press-gang stole away my boy, and my feelings became personal. His little girl told me to-day that he was alive. I thought him dead. But he escaped from the British ship, and for safety joined Nansemond. This I learned to-day for the first time, from the little girl who was here to get a pass to join him. Now I know he don't like the pirate service, and if you will pardon him and let him come home to his old father, this is all the reward I will ask, and I will serve you as faithfully as I have done to-night."

"Well, I think I can trust you. The pardon of your son shall be duly made out to-morrow. But you must be vigilant."

"Oh yes. With such a reward in view, what would I not do. I will not sleep. I will be near you to warn you of danger. I will converse with the negro. I think money will induce him to join me, and his aid will be valuable; that is, if he does know any thing about the pirate. But, I am inclined to think he does not."

"Did you see which way the pirate went after leaving this room?"

"My old eyes are not very good; but it seemed as if I saw a dark figure gliding through the large hall."

"Perhaps he is still in the building. Let a thorough search be made," cried the General, evidently much excited. This was done, but no trace of any stranger could be found. A guard was then placed, and the General, dismissing his officers, retired to his own rooms in the upper part of the building, to be followed by father Wilbert. After they had seated themselves, the old man said:

"I think, General, you had better renew my pass, and write it in such a manner that I can go anywhere and at any hour. It is at night that Nansemond will work, and it is at night that I can track him best."

The necessary paper was given without hesitancy, but the officer's hand trembled violently as he wrote. Nansemond's presence had unnerved him.

"Now, if you will permit the old man to rest himself for an hour upon the mat in the anteroom, he will be ready for work." Saying which, he carefully folded the paper he had received, placed it in his bosom, and stretched himself upon the mat.

The General retired to bed, but not to sleep. His brain was burning with fever. He had been guilty of many outrages, and it appeared to him as if retribution was at hand. The presence of Nansemond, his mysterious movements, the firing of the pistol, the ball of which had just grazed his temple, and that, too, when surrounded by his officers and soldiers, the threat of his enemy to visit him at midnight—all tended to impress him with a terror he could not shake off. It is true his quarters were surrounded with a strong guard, who would be vigilant, and the old man was lying at his door like a watch-dog. He had weapons, too, within his reach. Still he feared, he knew not what. His own dark passions were the demons which were haunting him. Presently the old man arose and said:

"General, I can not sleep. There is a strange sound below—something like a cautious footfall. I will go down and see if I can ascertain the cause."

"Stay, old man. Go to the street door. Send one of the guard up here to take your place until you return."

"All right!" The old man proceeded directly to the street door, delivered his message, and the soldier was soon in the anteroom near the General.

Father Wilbert then went in search of the supposed intruder. A large number of rooms were examined, but they were merely occupied with boxes, muskets, uniforms, and accouterments belonging to the British army. At length he was challenged by a guard who was standing in the hall. He answered that he was searching the building by order of the General, and exhibited his authority.

"What are you guarding?" asked the old man.

"A nigger is in the black-hole below, who is charged with being a spy, and belonging to Nansemond's crew."

"Open the door; I must speak to him." The outer door was swung back; then steps were passed which led to the underground room, and the barred iron grating only intervened.

"Well, Sam," said the old man, "you are fast, are you?"

"Father Wilbert!" exclaimed the negro, in surprise, as, by the dim lamp overhead, the old man's form became clear to sight.

"Yes. Come close, soldier. I want you to hear all I say to the negro. Now, Sam, I want you to answer me truly. You were the servant of Mrs. Welland, were you not?"

Whether the negro suspected that father Wilbert was playing a double game or was really a tool of the British, or whether he himself was inclined to confess, it was difficult to tell. Of course he could not have any very great confidence in the old man, as he had only seen him once. At all events, he answered:

"Yes, massa, dat's my wocation."

"She was a friend of Nansemond, was she not?"

"Yes, massa, I s'pose so. She was a frien' to de patriots generally, and to some ob dem very particularly."

"Have you ever seen the pirate at her house?"

"Yes, massa, on seberal indiwiidual occasions."

"You know him well?"

"Golly! guess I ought to know him! He's give dis nigger many a shilling for important serbices, as lady-guard, shoe black, and minister in general."

"Do you know any places where he is likely to be found?"

"Dat's jis' what I do know, kase I's been his land pilot many times."

"Will you go with me and do just as I say in every thing, and help me to find where Nansemond secretes himself if I will get you out of prison and reward you well?"

"Oh, yes, massa, do just as you say, shuah."

"You need not close the upper door, soldier. I am going to the General's room. I shall return in a few moments with an order for Sam to accompany me, and you can then go to your quarters."

"Thank you. I don't like standing guard over niggers."

The old man left, and soon reached the General's rooms. The soldier who had taken his place requested permission to return to his post, as his time had nearly expired, and he would soon be relieved. This was granted.

"And now, what have you discovered?" asked the General.

"Nothing. I do not think the pirate is in the building. But the negro has consented to point out to me many of his haunts. Sam is *not* his servant, but he belongs to a Mrs. Welland, and has seen the pirate often."

"Shall I send a file of soldiers with you?"

"I think not. It would attract too much attention. When I have ascertained where he is, then I will bring you word, and you can act as you think best in the matter."

"Well, you wish an order for the release of Sam?"

"Yes, and to go where he pleases. I will be answerable that he does not deceive me or play me false."

"Very well. It shall be as you say. Only be answerable for his conduct."

The order was written and handed over. "Now," continued the General, "if you are faithful your son shall be pardoned at once. But when you go to the cell for the negro, see that the guard placed there is transferred to the ante-chamber."

The old man left the room, and his footsteps echoed along the passage-way.

It was, perhaps, five minutes before the soldier entered the anteroom, and took the place of father Wilbert. He paced

rapidly back and forth, and his footfall was heavy. At last the General said:

"Stop your walking. I wish to sleep."

The soldier entered the room and approached the bed. He bent over it and asked:

"Can such as *you* sleep?"

The General started up; but he saw the cold steel glittering at his breast, and, sinking back, he asked:

"Who are you?"

"I am Alberto Nansemond."

The General groaned in very agony. He then asked:

"What do you here? What is it you seek?"

"A true answer to every question I shall ask. Where is my father?"

"A prisoner in Fort McHenry."

"What is to be his fate?"

"By sentence of the king he is to die upon the scaffold on Friday—to-morrow—at sunset, if by that time he has not given such information as will result in the capture of the pirate of the Chesapeake."

"Can you not save him?"

"No; it is the edict of the king."

"Where is Mr. Randall, his wife and child?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Randall are also in the fort."

"What is to be their fate?"

"Imprisonment until the rebellion is crushed."

"It will be a long one, then. Where is the child?"

"She is on board one of the vessels in Hampton Roads."

"Now, I will tell you what you must do," exclaimed Nansemond, his voice trembling with intense feeling. "Go to the fort to-morrow. If you can not pardon my father, at least stay the execution. If you do not, I tell you as I have told you before through messengers, no spot on earth shall hide you from my vengeance. If that gray-haired man dies, better for you that you had never seen the light."

"I will do all I can," replied the trembling wretch, "but can not promise success."

"See that you do what I have ordered. And now one thing more. If you make the least outcry before I have time to leave this house, you will pay the forfeit with your life."

"I will be silent." Nansemond disappeared.

When father Wilbert reached the cell where the negro was confined, he showed the order, and Sam was released. He passed with him into the open air, then, placing a paper in his hand, the old patriot exclaimed:

"Go—quick to the vessel! There is danger. Delay not a moment. That paper explains all. I have just received it from Nansemond."

"All right," said Sam, as he bounded away.

When Wilbert returned to the General's room, he found him pale with rage and fear.

"In God's name!" he cried, "who did you send here to fill your place?"

"No one. I thought I should return so soon it would be useless."

"Nansemond has been here!"

"Nansemond!" echoed Wilbert. "Where is he now?"

"He passed that door not five minutes ago, dressed as a British soldier. He must have been watching us."

"I will give the alarm at once," cried the old man, as he sprung to his feet.

"No! no!" shrieked the General. "It would be my death. Let him go! Let him go!"

The old man stood looking on in silent wonder.

CHAPTER XII.

"BETTER LATE THAN NEVER."

ROSIE RANDALL, after her father, mother and herself had been taken prisoners, had been separated from her parents and taken on board a ship-of-war, to add to the distress of her parents, and give the vessel a semi-protection, by the presence of an American lady, from the terrible guns of Nansemond. The pirate was known to avoid firing on vessels which contained females as prisoners. This pusillanimous resort of the enemy, who dared not face a brave foe, so

humiliating to the officers and crew, did not receive much countenance from the wardrooms and forecastle. In this case it received an active sympathy, which was betrayed in many ways, for Rosie, ere long, became the pet of officers and crew.

Among the crew was one old weather-beaten tar, who gloried in the name of Roaring Jack, but who had belied his title very much since his acquaintance with the prisoner, for he had become as gentle as a lamb, and would sit for hours in the forecastle, "spinning yarns" about the "wonders of the deep." To these stories Rosie would listen with childish delight, and the presence of the old man appeared almost, at times, to reconcile her to her situation.

She was on board the vessel which had been attacked and torn in pieces by Nansemond, soon after taking command of the *Pride*. When the ship was sinking, Jack caught the child in his arms and swam with her toward one of the other vessels. But he appeared to change his mind, and turned in the direction of the shore, which he reached in safety. He had determined to save the girl, but he hardly knew in what manner it could be accomplished. For two days they subsisted on berries, but the pangs of hunger were becoming sharp.

At this time the old man saw the vessel of Captain Randall rounding the point. He at once recognized the *Pride* as the captured *Spitfire*. A few moments' observation satisfied him that the vessel was still held by the Yankees, and he soon succeeded in attracting their attention. A little boat was sent, and soon the happy Rosie was clasped in the arms of her brother. Her story was soon told, and the old man came in for no small share of attentions.

From inquiries, Randall became satisfied that his parents still were in Fort McHenry, and he resolved upon a rapid return toward Baltimore.

It was midnight when Sam reached the vessel with the paper, which he at once handed to Lieutenant Ransom. It was read to that officer, and notes of command instantly followed.

"All hands to quarters! Work to be done." Soon a hundred and fifty men stood before him.

"Boys," said he, "the father of Captain Nansemond is confined in yonder fort, and is to be executed at sundown to-morrow. The parents of Captain Randall are also there. We must rescue them. Will you undertake it?"

"Ay, ay!" cried the men; "even to the death."

"The plan is this. There will be an effort made to stay the execution, and Nansemond thinks it will be successful. I am to go at once for Randall and the *Pride*, to assist in the attack. It is hardly possible for me to return by to-morrow night. I shall only take with me twenty men, leaving you one hundred and thirty. The fort is not manned by more than seventy or eighty men. The wall is sloping upon the land side, and you can scale it. Captain Wilton, you will take the men and move across the marsh to-night, and conceal yourselves in the tall grass in the rear of the fort. Here you must remain quiet during the whole day, and until I arrive with the reinforcements. If the execution is *not* deferred, you will receive a signal which you will understand. You will then make the attack at once. And now, boys, be off, but mind the red-coats, for there is a large body of them coming upon us through the woods. Sam is to return to Baltimore."

Wilton led the way, followed by his men, while the little Dolly dropped out of her lair, and soon reached the open bay. Mrs. Welland, Lettie nor Ransom slept that night. It was just at the gray of morning when Lettie exclaimed:

"If I am not mistaken, yonder is the *Pride* bearing down upon us." It was, indeed. Matters were soon explained, and the two vessels dashed forward on their return toward Baltimore.

It was late in the morning when the General awoke. He sprang from his couch with expressions of surprise and anger. Father Wilbert was fast asleep upon the rug. But he was aroused by the noise, and slowly raised himself.

"Well, have you discovered any thing?" asked the General.

"Yes; but I am waiting for the return of Sam. He has been tracking him. My old bones were not nimble enough. I will see." The old man left the room, and soon returned, saying:

"Sam has tracked him to his lair. There is no vessel in the place Arnell described. I am satisfied that Nansemond has no force nearer than the roads, and that he himself is lurking around in search of his father. Indeed, it is rumored this morning that one Randall has taken possession of the vessel, that the crew have chosen him captain, as the men refuse to serve any longer under Nansemond."

"Good news, indeed. Pray heaven it may be true!"

"Well, I shall look around this morning, and I think by noon I can bring you some decided information."

The old man left the room. He went toward Federal Hill, in company with Sam. It was perhaps noon when he exclaimed:

"Ah, all is working well. If no accident happens now, the father of Nansemond will be saved. Yonder are two small crafts gliding over the waters of the inner bay. Perhaps they are those the captain is expecting. Come, let us return to head-quarters." As Wilbert approached the General, he said:

"Sam will lead the soldiers. Twenty will be sufficient. The pirate is concealed in a ledge of rocks not far from the fort. I would go with him myself, but my old limbs would fail me."

"I am about starting for the fort. The villain shall come just in time to hang by the side of his father."

The General proceeded to the wharf, where he entered a little boat in company with two officers and father Wilbert, and was soon landed at the fort. Entering, he cried:

"Bring up that old hoary dog that is to hang to-night."

Old Hubert Nansemond was brought forth. He was a venerable appearing man, but confinement and hard treatment had left their marks. His frame trembled, but it was not with fear, for his look was firm and defiant. The sun was fast sinking in the west.

"Bring forth the other rebels," cried the General. "I was a fool last night," he muttered. "I allowed myself to be controlled by a momentary fear. But I will be revenged now. They all shall witness the execution of Hubert Nansemond, the spy, and his pirate son." Mr. and Mrs. Randall were brought forth.

"That is not all. I have received positive proof that a Mrs. Stanley has, on more than one occasion, harbored the bold pirate. I have ordered her arrest. Here she comes." That lady had just arrived, and was led into the fort. Ruth, her servant, was with her.

"And now, old man, prepare," cried the commandant. The gallows was looming up by his side. He quietly stepped upon the platform.

"Stay, General, you surely can not murder that old man," cried Mrs. Stanley, as she fell upon her knees before that officer.

"Away, woman!" he yelled. "I *will* do as I have ordered. Father and son shall swing side by side."

"You forget," replied father Wilbert, "that Hubert Nansemond is held as a hostage for his son, and by order of the king. You *dare* not execute him if the pirate is caught." This was correct, and the commandant bit his lip for vexation. At length an idea appeared to strike him, and he said:

"The father is to be executed at sundown provided the son is not caught. He shall die just as soon as the sun sinks from sight. *If* the son is brought in *after* that hour, of course he will not be saved because his father has suffered. Why do *you* feel so deep an interest in the old man?" he sharply asked.

"Look at those venerable locks and then at my own. Is it not natural that I should wish to spare his innocent life?" There was an earnestness about these words which showed plainly that old father Wilbert spoke with feeling.

"I believe you are an old traitor!" yelled the General. "See, there is but a moment more."

"Oh, spare him for an hour!" implored Wilbert.

"No, not without the sun shall stand still in the heavens."

"Half an hour!"

"Not an instant more. I will have the pirate at the appointed time, or the old rebel dies."

"Then save my father and take Alberto Nansemond!" cried the supposed father Wilbert. In an instant the long white hair and beard had been thrown from his head and face, the patched dress tossed aside, and the bold privateer of the Chesapeake stood before the astonished crowd. As soon as the General recovered his powers of speech he shouted:

"Seize the pirate—hang him like a dog!"

"Rader t'ink not, massa Gin'ral," yelled Sam, whose head appeared above the rear wall.

"Quick! we are surprised! Hang—" but before he could speak further a hundred men had leaped within the inclosure, and the walls were swarming with hundreds more. The garrison saw that resistance would be useless, and quietly laid down their arms. The guns were spiked, so as to prevent alarm, and the small-arms all thrown into the water. This done, our friends commenced the work of embarking again on board their own vessels, which in the darkness was soon effected, the *Pride* and the *Dolly* first having been run up to the base of the sea-wall.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE little vessels had no difficulty in passing the ships-of-war in the darkness, and were soon well out in the bay.

"I suppose," said Nansemond, "we must enter into some explanations, now that we are all together once again."

"I golly, massa cap'n, I'd like to know if dat was you all de time to-day an' last night, when I thought it was ole fader Wilbert."

"It was. Father Wibert did not leave the *Dolly* after he once came on board. I disguised myself as the old man while I was at the house of Mrs. Welland. I fired the pistol at the General while standing at the back of the room. I wished to *serve* him further, and also to visit him during the night, and so when I left his room, I put on a British uniform and returned as a soldier, but made myself known to him, and got all the information I required. I then assumed my venerable disguise in order to carry on my plans to-day."

"Well, I gubs 'em up!" and Samuel Josephus Adolphus Mason—"what wasn't a mason nohow"—went to a distant part of the vessel to talk with his "lubly" Eliza.

"I think I have news for you, father Wilbert. I met a

young lady in Baltimore by the name of Mary Nelson. She mistook me for you. She said the son of father Wilbert was alive, and on my own vessel. Captain Randall, where is Charles Wilbert?"

Randall did not hear until he had been spoken to a second time. He was so absorbed in conversation with Lettie, that it was no wonder. But he finally answered:

"Oh, Charles is with us. He asked permission to go into the city as soon as we arrived to-day, for the purpose of bringing his Mary and father on board, and of course I gave it to him. He could not find his father, poor fellow, but he found his sweetheart, brought her down to the point, and now they are conversing, happy as clams, just forward there."

"Send him to me, Randall," said Nansemond.

"Poor fellow," exclaimed Wilbert, "I'm glad he has found some happiness here. I wish he could find his true father, for he is a noble boy."

"Are you not his real father?"

"No. But I have a question to ask you, and I have found it difficult to restrain myself until the proper moment. In youth you resided in Switzerland, did you not?"

"Yes."

"And that old man is your father?"

"Yes."

"Hubert, don't you know me?" cried Wilbert, springing to his feet.

"Ferdinand Lorette!" cried old Mr. Nansemond, and the two friends fell into each other's arms. But a shriek near them, and the cry of "Father! father!" caused them both to turn. Mrs. Stanley bounded into the arms of Wilbert, or Lorette, as we will now call him, while Nansemond cried:

"Your long-lost child, old man—your own Fanny!"

It was a meeting no pen can describe. The feeble old man held his child close to his breast, and his tears mingled with hers.

Charles Wilbert, as he was called, had now approached, and was gazing upon the affecting scene. When the daughter disengaged herself from her father's arms, Charles extended his hands and exclaimed:

"Father!"

"Why, father," exclaimed Fanny, "you had but one child."

"True, Charles is not my son by blood, but he has been a son to me, and I shall ever love him as such. But do not grieve, dear boy."

"Oh, no. I have always known you were not my real father, for I have an indistinct recollection of another home. But since you rescued me from the Indians I have loved you as a father."

"From the Indians!" cried Alberto. "When? Where?"

"From the Tuscaroras, fifteen years since," replied Lorette.

"Was there no relic about his person by which he might be recognized by his parents?"

"Upon a bit of ivory which was attached to a silken cord about his neck was carved two hearts."

"Have you preserved it, boy?" cried Nansemond.

"Yes, here it is." He handed forth the emblem.

"My two children," exclaimed Alberto, as he pointed to the hearts, "Alberto and Lettie."

"And I am—"

"My own lost child—my only boy!" Neither father nor son wept, but their feelings were perhaps as deep as those who did. And Lettie, she found time to give her brother a sister's fond welcome, notwithstanding the presence of Randall.

Our story is soon closed. Our friends proceeded at once to Philadelphia, where the females were safely bestowed, while the *Pride* and the *Dolly* returned to the bay, and for three years more were the terror of the British navy.

But time works changes. Captain Stanley was killed in battle, nobly fighting for his country's honor, and Fanny, after a lapse of two years, became the wife of Alberto Nansemond. Samuel Josephus Adolphus Mason had formed a copartnership with his "lubly" Eliza, with the consent of Mrs. Welland, who had formed a deep attachment to Fanny, and, at her earnest solicitation, had consented to share her home.

Lettie often mourned the absence of her dear husband Owen, while Charlie Nansemond and Mary Nelson, Fred. Wiltor and Rosie Randall, only waited for the ending of the war to join their fortunes.

Old fathers Hubert and Lorette shared alternately the excitement of the sea and the quiet of the cottage.

Ransom received a vessel of his own, and the old sailor who had rescued Rosie from the British war-ship became his second in command. Poor Conrad was killed in an engagement, devoted to the last to his guns, which were handled with astonishing accuracy of aim and effect.

At length the joyful news arrived that our friends could all return to their loved ones. Cornwallis had surrendered to General Gates at Yorktown. Peace came with its blessedalm. There was no more bloody work for the DOLLY, or for the PRIDE OF THE NANSEMOND. AMERICA WAS FREE!

THE END

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